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951 the Fund set up an experimental discussion , with the threefold purpose of (1) preparing a r of programs around a variety of subjects in elds of political, international, economic, and al affairs, and in the humanities; (2) testing the materials used in these programs in experimental form with discussion groups which were held in different parts of the country under a variety of institutional auspices and led by lay leaders; and (3) using the best of the programs thus developed in conducting a limited experiment in distribution through selected institutions of higher education.

The project developed some 35 different programs on 21 different topics. The Fund was aided, either in the development of the programs or in testing them, by 28 universities and colleges. Approximately 250 educators, subject-matter experts, and discussion-group specialists helped in planning and preparing programs and program materials. Over 15,000 people in 154 communities (33 States and the District of Columbia) participated in one or more of the experimental discussion groups using the programs.

The report deals with the development and testing of the programs, reviews subsequent experiences relating to distribution and use; and presents a brief statement of conclusions and a look into the future.

Although The Fund for Adult Education (an independent organization established by the Ford Foundation in 1951) ceased operations in 1961, its interests in the advancement of study-discussion were assumed in January 1961 by the American Foundation for Continuing Education, 19 South LaSalle Street, Chicago 3, Ill.

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Accent on Learning

AN ANALYTICAL HISTORY OF THE FUND FOR ADULT EDUCATION'S EXPERIMENTAL DISCUSSION PROJECT 1951-1959

BY

Glen Burch

THE FUND FOR ADULT EDUCATION

Accent on Learning by Glen Burch is an account of an experiment in adult liberal learning, which he directed from 1951 to 1958 for The Fund for Adult Education, an independent organization established by The Ford Foundation in 1951. The experiment explored possibilities in the development and use of study-discussion programs for adults led by trained lay leaders. It was a successful attempt to find ways by which high quality learning experiences could be economically offered to many adults by educational institutions. **Accent on Learning** concludes that study-discussion opens exciting opportunities for schools, libraries, colleges and universities, business, industry, labor, agriculture, and government, to provide liberal education of high quality to vastly greater audiences than they have yet reached.

This is the first of four studies of the effectiveness of study-discussion being published by the Fund. The other three will appear early in 1961.

The Fund for Adult Education will cease operations about the middle of 1961. Effective January 1, 1961, the Fund's special interests in the advancement of study-discussion in the liberal arts will be assumed by the American Foundation for Continuing Education. The Foundation will act as a clearinghouse for information on all aspects of study-discussion, and particularly on the current status of program materials developed by the Fund and others. In addition, the Foundation will continue to develop its own study-discussion programs, to aid in the training of discussion leaders and, through research, to advance understanding and the use of study-discussion in liberal adult education. For information write to:
The American Foundation for Continuing Education, 19 South LaSalle Street, Chicago 3, Illinois.

PUBLICATION DATE: DECEMBER 15, 1960

THE
FUND
FOR
ADULT EDUCATION

Accent on Learning

AN ANALYTICAL HISTORY OF THE FUND FOR ADULT EDUCATION'S EXPERIMENTAL DISCUSSION PROJECT

1951-1959

BY

Glen Burch

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Preface

BY

C. SCOTT FLETCHER

PRESIDENT

THE FUND FOR
ADULT EDUCATION

This book represents one of four "Studies in Adult Group Learning in the Liberal Arts" being published in 1960 by The Fund for Adult Education. This, the first one, is an analytical history of the study-discussion programs developed by the Fund's Experimental Discussion Project: *Accent on Learning,* by the Director of the Project, Dr. Glen Burch. The other three are research studies, resulting from independent investigations conducted by highly competent research groups in the social sciences. Together they represent the first serious attempt to apply the methods of social science research to the evaluation of adult education programs: in this case, programs of reading and discussion in small groups led by non-professional students of the subject matter rather than by experts in it.

Established in 1951 by The Ford Foundation, the Fund was assigned a concern with "that part of the educational process which begins when formal schooling is finished." The Fund's Board of Directors defined their purpose as that of "supporting programs of liberal adult education which will contribute to the development of mature, wise, and responsible citizens who can participate intelligently in a free society." To these ends, the Fund has laid particular emphasis upon study-discussion programs in the liberal arts. It has done so not only through its own Project, but also by giving substantial financial assistance to universities, liberal arts centers, and national organizations which sponsored and promoted such programs, developed program materials, and trained leaders.

In 1959-60, the Great Books Foundation enrolled 50,000 participants in 2,700 groups in more than a thousand communities, in the United States and abroad. The American Foundation for Continuing Education had more than 10,000 group participants in nearly five hundred communities. Universities, colleges, public libraries, public evening schools, and a host of local social and civic agencies and educational groups, including private persons and their friends, have organized and sponsored the group study of these materials. In 1959, more than 15,000 men and women were engaged in the study and discussion programs brought into being by the Fund. While these were, for an experimental period, confined to ten "Test Centers" (mentioned in Burch's study, and described more fully in the Fund's biennial Report for 1955-57 and in a document to be issued later this year), by 1958 a rapidly growing list of other educational organizations, national and local, and of private groups, were using these programs. At the present time, twelve of the programs are being published or prepared for publication by commercial publishers; and the audio-visual components of the programs are being distributed by the Audio-Visual Center at the University of Indiana.

With the spread of study-discussion programs in the liberal arts came recognition of the need for careful study of the values and the effects of this method for the people who took part. As more colleges and universities moved to set up programs of this type, concern was felt by many faculty members over the maintenance of high educational standards, particularly where the group leadership was in the hands of those who were not professional educators. The Fund, therefore, as early as 1955, began a series of research grants for studies of the participants, the leaders, and the educational effectiveness of study-discussion programs, the studies being made by independent investigators not themselves connected with the program. Three major studies were made between 1955 and 1959.

The first study, made in 1956 by members of the faculties of the University of California at Los Angeles, the California Institute of Technology, and Whittier College, was directed by Abbott Kaplan, then Assistant Director of Extension at UCLA.* The field of the studies consisted of 118 liberal arts groups, in four content areas: ***World Affairs, World***

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*Dr. Kaplan is now Director of The New School for Social Research, New York City.

Politics, Ways of Mankind, and *Introduction to the Humanities.* The specific sample included 150 individuals who were members of groups in Los Angeles, Pasadena, and Whittier, and fifty of the group leaders: the method was based on 325 interviews, before, during, and after the ten-week program, and observation of 52 group sessions.

The second study was made in 1957 by the National Opinion Research Center of Chicago, using some 1900 participants in 172 *Great Books* groups. ranging from first-year to fifth-year status within that program. Interviewers visited the groups and administered detailed questionnaires; and the responses were coded on IBM cards and subjected to elaborate statistical analysis. The director of this study was Dr. James A. Davis.

The third major study, in 1958, was designed to compare learning effects of the same content, *Ways of Mankind,* with two methods: university lecture and lay-led group discussion. The sample studied consisted of three lecture classes, enrolling 283 adults, and twelve discussion groups with 293 participants, all within the liberal arts program of UCLA. Again, use was made of questionnaires, interviews, and direct observation. The director of this study was Dr. Richard J. Hill,* Department of Anthropology and Sociology, UCLA.

The publication of these studies, which were separately conceived and independently carried out, is not intended as a plea for one method over others. It is intended as a contribution to the discussion, among educators and interested adult students, of the appropriate place and use and purpose of one of the many methods of learning that appeal to men and women, and as an aid to educators and administrators in their choices of program methods and student "publics". Here, for the first time, are presented — though in admittedly preliminary form — responsible research data and statistical interpretation on adults in liberal arts programs. The studies themselves make it clear that the reading-discussion method attracts a particular kind of audience, and that the larger population from which it is drawn has many other tastes and proclivities. The question, therefore, is not, "Which method is best?" but, "What is the best type of program and method for given sorts of people, and what ends are best served by which educational means?"

If this broader question were studied for many types of education and many kinds of educational publics, our skill and effectiveness in adult education would be immeasurably advanced. It is to this greatly needed research effort that we hope to contribute by offering these studies to the public.

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*Dr. Hill is now with the Department of Sociology, University of Texas.

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Foreword

BY

GLEN BURCH

"Self-government," W. H. Utterback once said, "is government by talk. Two kinds of talk. On the one hand, talk directed to the electorate by publicists and political leaders to whom we look for information and advice. On the other hand, talk among voters as they assimilate and digest information placed before them and make up their minds on public questions. Both kinds of talk are necessary for the formation of sound public opinion." He noted that developments in the technology and techniques of mass communications "have swollen the stream of *talk from above* from the meager trickle on which our grandfathers subsisted to an overwhelming torrent," while many factors have operated to diminish *talk at the base,* so that "our democracy is in some danger of drying up at the roots."

To engage seriously in the discussion of serious issues is to examine our own thinking and the thinking of others, to inform and be informed, to stimulate and be stimulated. Beyond this, it is to learn more about ourselves and about others, and to help them learn more about us, themselves, and one another. Even beyond this, it is to improve basic *skills* of thinking and social behavior – of communication (reading, listening and speaking), and of human relationships (leading, following, cooperating) – skills essential for effective participation in many situations in the home, in work, and in citizenship.

Why Study-Discussion Programs?

To accomplish these results *discussion* must be done well. The *materials* must be significant and good, and they must be read and reflected upon. *Participation* must be purposeful, intelligent, and skillful; and so must be its *leadership*. The *educational experience* must be orderly, sequential and sustained. To say these things, and more that could be said, is to say only that education is a demanding mistress, no matter how she is wooed, whether by solitary reading, lecture, demonstration, experiment, or in whatever other way.

For these and other reasons, some of which will be given in this Report, The Fund for Adult Education, from its beginning, gave support to study and discussion by informal groups based on substantive materials and using trained leaders who were not necessarily either professional educators or experts in subject matter. It early gave grants to several national organizations offering such programs and training.* And in 1951 it began the Experimental Discussion Project.

In undertaking the Experimental Discussion Project, the Fund sought to break new ground in this important field.

This summary report on the eight-year venture reviews the manner in which it was conducted and the major findings that emerged.

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*In its report for 1951 the Fund listed the following study-discussion programs to which it had given financial aid:

- the *Great Books Discussion Courses* of the Great Books Foundation;
- the *Seminars in World Politics* of the American Foundation for Political Education;
- the Courses in *The American Tradition, World Politics, An Invitation to Literature, Group Living,* and *Analytical Reading* of the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults;
- the *American Heritage Program* of the American Library Association;
- the *Economic Workshops* of the Joint Council on Economic Education of the Committee for Economic Development;
- the *Discussion Programs on World Affairs* of the American Labor Education Service; and
- the series of *Discussion Courses in International, Political, and Economic Problems* of the Inter-University Labor Education Committee.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We take this occasion to express our gratitude for the generous cooperation and encouragement given us by the several hundred individuals in various parts of the country who did the actual work of program development and testing. Also to the following members (present and past) of the Fund staff: President C. Scott Fletcher (without whose ideas and support the Project would never have been possible), vice-presidents Robert J. Blakely, George H. Griffiths, and John Osman; Elwin V. Svenson, Paul H. Durrie, Mary Ella Osman; Project secretaries Margaret Horkin, Mary Lou Class, and Alice Cerasa.

John Walker Powell, who served as field consultant from 1954 and joined the Project as full-time consultant in 1956, supervised the development and testing of several of the later programs. Edgar Dale and Ralph W. Tyler assisted in the early days of the Project as part-time consultants on evaluation.

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Introduction

This is a summary report on one of the most ambitious and far-reaching experiments involving adult study-discussion groups ever undertaken in this country.

Two things underlay the Fund's decision in 1951 to set up the Experimental Discussion Project.

One was its paramount concern with the advancement of liberal adult education.

The other was its conviction that the small group study-discussion method was one of the most promising of all known methods calculated to promote this advance.

The purposes of the Project were threefold:

(1) to prepare a number of programs around a variety of subjects in the fields of political affairs, international affairs, economic affairs, social affairs,

and the humanities. This would involve the establishment of sequences of interrelated topics for series of ten or twelve two-hour discussion meetings, built around basic readings and supplemented, where appropriate, by various audio-visual aids;

(2) to test these materials in experimental form with discussion groups, formed under a variety of institutional auspices, held in different parts of the country, and led by lay leaders;

(3) to use the best of the programs thus developed in conducting a limited experiment in "distribution" through selected institutions of higher learning. Here substantial fees would be charged for participation, in groups led by competent, trained lay leaders. The major purpose would be to determine the extent to which the local sponsor of such an operation could make it self-supporting.

The Experimental Discussion Project was conducted from mid-1951 to mid-1958. More than two million dollars was spent on the Project, directly or indirectly.

This Report is divided into three parts. Part One deals with the development and testing of the programs. Part Two reviews subsequent experiences relating to their distribution and use. Part Three is devoted to a brief statement of conclusions and a look into the future.*

Summary of Part One: Preparation of Programs

A study-discussion program may be defined as a specially prepared (or selected) set of materials — frequently including audio-visual aids in addition to readings — built around a specific subject, arranged in a fixed sequence of sub-topics (usually ten or more), and designed for use by groups employing the discussion method of learning.

Its purpose is to provide a group (usually meeting weekly for two hours) with a continuing focus for intensive examination of, critical reflection on, and thoughtful exchange of ideas about, important concepts, issues and facts relating to the subject.

When the collected materials and "course outlines" providing the essential framework for a series of discussion programs are designed to be produced in quantity and used in many groups, the programs are often referred to as "packaged" programs.

The Fund was interested in study-discussion in general and in experimenting with new kinds of study-discussion programs in particular — experiments which would involve (1) a range of subjects, both in variety and in depth, and (2) a range of materials, always readings (some selected, most specially written), and supplementary audio-visual "properties." Therefore — the Experimental Discussion Project.

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*The Appendix contains more detailed analyses, exhibits, etc.

In the first two programs which the Experimental Discussion Project developed, selected films were used to supplement specially prepared readings. In the next four, specially edited recordings — adapted from educational radio transcriptions — shared with readings the role of providing background information. All of the other programs were built chiefly around readings, with audio-visual materials of one kind or another — films, filmstrips, slides, recordings — used where appropriate.

Guides for discussion leaders were prepared for each program.

All in all, the Project was responsible for the development of some 35 different programs around 21 different topics. Specific subjects treated included aging, American political issues, anthropology, community development, conditions under Communism, economic reasoning, education in a free society, human freedom, the humanities, inflation, international relations, the Jeffersonian Heritage, law and justice, the mass media, modern painting, modern poetry, parent education, separation of powers in American government, Shakespeare and his theatre, Southeast Asia, and urbanism.

Nearly all of the programs prepared in the Project were handled through contracts with institutions or individuals. Usually their development was directed by one or two subject-matter specialists, assisted by individuals who had some knowledge of the group discussion process.

When they were completed, they were inexpensively duplicated and tried out with selected "test groups." Some of these were conducted at Fund headquarters; others were set up in various parts of the country under the auspices of schools, libraries, universities and colleges and agencies of informal adult education.

Twenty-eight universities and colleges cooperated with the Fund in carrying out the experiment — either in the development of the programs, or in testing them.*

About 250 educators, subject-matter experts, and discussion group specialists were involved in planning and preparing programs and program materials.

Over 15,000 people in 154 communities (33 states and the District of Columbia) participated in one or more of the experimental discussion groups using the programs.

Summary of Part Two: Distribution and Use

The program-development phase of the Project provided evidence of the validity of the "packaged" study-discussion program as a useful tool for the advancement of liberal adult education.

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*In addition, 19 public schools and 32 public libraries cooperated in testing one or more of the experimental programs.

The Fund then set about determining how the best of the programs developed in this fashion could be made widely available to interested adults.

This involved the Project not only in problems related to the publication and distribution of the materials used in the programs, but also in the selection of appropriate local sponsoring institutions, identification and recruitment of group participants, organization and management of the groups, discovering and training of lay group discussion leaders, and finally – and most importantly – the exploring of ways and means of financing the whole operation.

It was decided that experimentation in the distribution and use of the programs would be conducted in cooperation with a number of selected universities and colleges, which would be asked to establish – for a three-year period – special "centers" through which discussion groups using the programs could be promoted. For this operation – known as the "Test Center Project" – fourteen of the programs which had successfully emerged from the earlier testing process were used.

Through special reports, interviews, and questionnaires, a considerable amount of information was gathered about participants, promotion techniques, leadership training procedures, and costs.

Summary of Part Three: Conclusions

The "packaged" study-discussion program – properly planned and developed – can provide an effective framework for individual study and group discussion of important concepts and issues of our day.

While readings – either specially prepared or carefully selected – are basic background materials, appropriate audio-visual aids – films, recordings, etc. – when used effectively in group meetings, tend to improve the "learning situation."

A wide range of topics – properly handled – lend themselves to the study-discussion approach to adult learning.

"Lay" people (i.e., non-teachers), carefully selected and properly trained, can provide effective discussion leadership for groups using study-discussion program materials.

Centers, established in universities and colleges, devoting time to the promotion and management of study-discussion groups, charging moderate fees and using lay leaders, can achieve a substantial – but not complete – degree of self-support.

Part One

THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDY-DISCUSSION PROGRAMS

Chapter One

THE "PACKAGED" STUDY-DISCUSSION PROGRAM IDEA

The very idea of a packaged program for purposes of adult discussion has been looked upon with suspicion by many. One of the cardinal principles of adult education has long been that of developing educational opportunities which would meet directly the "interests and needs" of the particular group of adults being educated. A "cut and dried" course, with both the materials and the sequence in which they were to be used prearranged – how could it provide a framework for a good learning situation for a variety of groups?

For many, the very term "packaged program" is a disparagement, because to them it seems to imply an attempt to "wrap up" in advance something as vital and unpredictable as a group of people studying and discussing a subject.

The case for the packaged program in adult education has been ably stated by Cyril O. Houle of the University of Chicago. Houle argues that this new educational idea, which he calls the "co-ordinated course" (and which the late John Schwertman termed the "focused discussion program") may be as important for the widespread development of adult education as the textbook was for the spread of the elementary and secondary schools.

"The co-ordinated course," Houle says, "constitutes an approach to adult education that faces squarely the necessity of giving a large number of people a few basic concepts." Furthermore, it "embodies very basic beliefs about adult education: that the students are mature, that they can conduct their own education, that they will want to be aided by highly expert guidance, that they need to use the various media of communication in terms of the appropriate values of each, that they find learning more profitable in groups, and that the value of their education lies in the changes which it brings about in them. These beliefs must surely underlie any sound program of education for the mature; at least it is hard to see how contradictory principles can be defended. . . . If the aim of spreading understanding to many people is accepted as a desirable goal, these principles, or something very like them, must be used. In no other way can the democratic hope for universal adult education be achieved."*

On the applicability of the co-ordinated course to continuing liberal education, Houle poses some assumptions which in turn suggest some guiding principles.

"The mature person should expect to take charge of his own education. He should want to learn the best that has been thought or said or portrayed by those who have had the deepest insight into what he hopes to learn. He should realize that many minds have preceded his along the particular voyage of inquiry on which he is embarking and that consequently he should try to secure the very best guidance as to what he should read and in what order. To maintain his independence and vigor of viewpoint, however, he should use experts in both content and method but never abdicate to them. The mature person will often study independently, but he should also seek the stimulation of a group of like-minded people who, through discussion, can bring their different backgrounds to bear on common problems and thereby illuminate the understanding of everyone concerned. This discussion is the joint responsibility of the whole group but often it is desirable for at least one member to accept the special duty of leadership to aid in achieving both focus and progression. The mature person always evaluates a program of learning in terms of the meaning it has

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*Houle, C. O., "The Use of Print in Adult Education Agencies," in *Adult Reading*, 55th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), pp. 185-6.

for him and the group to which he belongs. Finally, he expects that any given learning experience should provide him with the stimulus for further thinking, reading, and participation."*

Putting the Study-Discussion Program to Work

The most controversial aspect of the study-discussion program as a vehicle for continuing liberal adult education is that of discussion leadership. What should a leader do: try to lead discussion of pre-prepared materials or try to help the group decide on its own subject and prepare its own "course"?

"Every group and every leader of adults," one argument runs, "is unique. How can you expect them to learn anything from a 'course' that is built on a single pattern? What every group should do is develop its own course, around whatever it is that its members want to study and discuss. Thus they learn the art of decision-making right from the beginning." Leaders committed to this approach find it difficult, if not impossible, to handle the "packaged" program because they think it is wrong.

Another argument goes: "The idea of study-discussion is fine, but why the 'package'? If the key to a successful discussion group is a good leader, why can't he pick out his own materials and develop his own course? Each good leader, like each good teacher, has his own style for and approach to whatever subject he is handling. He is never completely at home with somebody else's material. Forget the package; it's just a set of handcuffs for a good man. Get some good leaders!"

These criticisms are valid only up to a certain point.

The idea that leaders of adult groups should be primarily concerned with helping discussion group participants plan their own courses of study and select their own materials certainly should be encouraged where such skilled leadership is *available*. Queens College, New York, has been experimenting (under a grant from the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults) on a program for adults which involves just this procedure. But not many teachers of adults or discussion leaders have this kind of skill. Without such skilled leadership, not many groups have the time, patience, and resourcefulness to go through the trial and error necessary to evolve on their own a program and materials for it.

With regard to the second argument, certainly no one can deny that a good leader, or a good teacher, may be more important than the particular materials being used. But, again, how many leaders or teachers of such excellence are around?

Choosing a learning situation on any subject is, in some respects, like selecting the way to build a house. Some argue that it would be better for all of us to design and construct our own dwellings. We could thus try to suit our own need, convenience and taste. And we would have the additional pleasure and profit of educating ourselves in the *process* of planning and constructing. But not all of us care, or are able, to spend that amount of time and energy. So, if we can afford it, we get an architect to plan it, and a contractor to put it up. In this way we preserve our right of choice and get attention to our particular needs and interests. If we don't want to, or can't, spend that much time or money on a "custom built" house, we can get a prefabricated house. Here we also have a choice: we can put it together ourselves, with a minimum of outside help, or we can hire someone to do it for us.

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*Houle, op. cit., pp. 172-3.

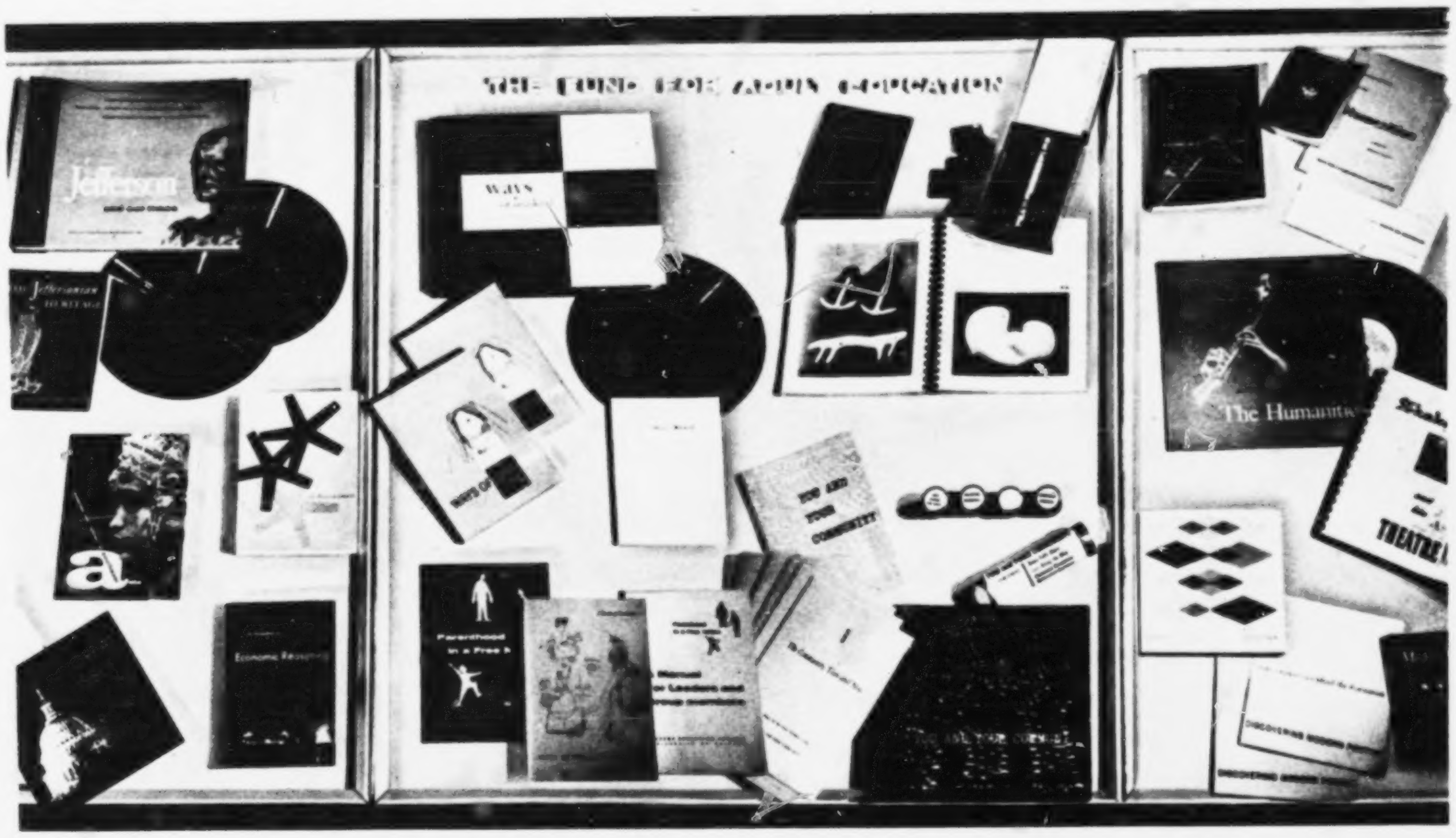
The "packaged" study-discussion program is to adult learning situations what the prefabricated house is to building. It is a minimum framework for learning in a given subject area.

But just as there should be many designs for prefabricated houses, so should there be for packaged programs.

As we have noted, one of the reasons the Fund set up the Experimental Discussion Project was to provide impetus for developing a greater *range* of study-discussion programs in the field of liberal adult education.

Further, by developing and encouraging the development of programs around a number of different subjects in the liberal arts and sciences, the Project was trying to find out the extent to which the *availability* of a wide variety of subjects, *appealing to a broad range of individual interests,* would broaden participation in adult discussion groups.

Finally, by using a combination of different media to provide background information for discussion, the Project was exploring two other ideas: (1) that, with the use of audio-visual aids with print, adults who felt uncomfortable with print alone would be attracted to group discussion; and (2) that the use of the combined media (particularly films and recordings which afforded participants in a group a *common experience* at the time they met together), supplemented by specially prepared guides on discussion procedure, would enable a group to function effectively with relatively untrained discussion leaders.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Theatre
Discovering

A baker's dozen of program "packages" – books, records, slides, film, leader guides, for a variety of programs, from Childhood to Aging, from Shakespeare to Southeast Asia: end-products of the Experimental Discussion Project, and **means** *to adult liberal learning through group study.*

Chapter Two

BEGINNINGS: EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMS WITH FILMS

In its first year of operation, the Project gave attention to the development and testing of experimental discussion program materials using selected films in conjunction with print in order to provide both stimulation and substance for adult groups.

Two programs were prepared and tested between June 1, 1951 and the end of June, 1952.

In developing these programs, the Project staff made certain assumptions:

1. That, while printed materials must be considered the basic background for group discussion, carefully selected films are an effective additional means of providing adult groups with information needed to discuss many of the important social problems of our day. Furthermore, they give a group a common *experience* around which the discussion can grow.

2. That a *series* of film discussion meetings built around a given topic provides a more productive and satisfying educational experience for participants than a single meeting.

3. That groups with leaders possessing relatively little experience with, or training in, group discussion techniques can get a great deal from film discussion meetings if they are provided with additional materials designed to (a) point up relevant issues; (b) suggest effective discussion techniques; (c) assist in preparing for, and putting on, a good film showing; and (d) help participants prepare for and follow up meetings by providing them with short essays and bibliographies.

GREAT MEN AND GREAT ISSUES

For its first venture in a film study-discussion program, the Project focused attention on some of the important recurring political issues that have been debated in our democracy from its inception. We thought that a review of the way in which some of the Founding Fathers and other early statesmen of the Republic regarded these fundamental issues would provide a useful background against which to discuss their present-day status.

The Films

From the outset the role of the motion picture in the combination of background materials was seen primarily as that of being a "device to entice," and of providing a group with a common experience.

We decided to build the program around selections from a series of biographical films on great Americans produced by Encyclopaedia Britannica Films. The reasons were: (1) Most of the films were available throughout the country; (2) they were authoritative; (3) they had been made in a series; (4) they paid some attention to issues as well as to biographies. They were, therefore, *adaptable* for use in adult discussion.

At the same time, they had been made neither for *adults* nor for *discussion*. They had been made primarily for projection in classes of high school students. That this would limit their value for informal adult discussion groups was recognized from the beginning, but just how and why they were limited were understood much better later when we were able to sketch the typical "profile" of the kinds of people who are attracted by study-discussion programs.* Nevertheless, the films were available, and we wanted to find out how useful they were for adult discussion.

Nine programs were constructed around the film biographies of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, George Washington, John Marshall, John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun (treated together in one program), and Abraham Lincoln.

The series was given the general title GREAT MEN AND GREAT ISSUES IN OUR AMERICAN HERITAGE.

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*See p. 57 *ff*.

The Essays

Short (2000-2500 word) essays were prepared providing concise statements of some of the major political issues faced by the statesmen under consideration, their positions with respect to the issues, and a brief sketch of the historical period. Distinguished scholars (several of whom had collaborated in the preparation of the films) wrote the essays.*

As Henry Steele Commager wrote in an Introduction to the participant's manual, these essays were "designed not as a series of discussions of great men, but of great issues; we do not approach the men through the issues, but the issues through the men."

The issues were the "reconciliation of liberty and order, majority rule and minority rights, nationalism and internationalism, the relations of church and state, of centralization and particularism, of individualism and the welfare state, of the nature of the executive power, of the judicial power, of extra-political economic power."

To help the discussion leaders, specialists in adult discussion leadership techniques prepared individual leader guides for each program. These gave tips for introducing the films, questions for discussion, and an illustrated check list of hints on good discussion leadership practice.

Supplementing this leader's guide, a four-page illustrated leaflet called "Bridging the Gap Between Viewing and Discussing" was prepared, suggesting approaches to group discussion after the film.

The programs were tested in the fall of 1951, revised in the spring of 1952, and made available for limited circulation that fall.

WORLD AFFAIRS ARE YOUR AFFAIRS

"International understanding" was chosen as the working title for the second experimental discussion program.

After exploring several possible approaches we decided to develop a series of ten sessions around the peoples and national problems of selected tension-area countries in Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Here the availability of suitable already-existing 16 mm films was again a major factor in the selection of the specific topics to be given attention.

Edgar Dale, Professor of Education at Ohio State University, served as chief consultant on the planning of the series, and Professor Alan F. Griffin of the same institution edited the specially prepared written materials.**

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*Nathan G. Goodman, Bernard Drell, John Allen Krout, Allan Nevins, Edward S. Corwin, Dexter Perkins, E. E. Schattschneider, Avery O. Craven, Arthur C. Cole, James G. Randall.

**These were prepared by Eugene Staley, Stanford Research Institute; Morris E. Opler, Cornell University; Edwin O. Reischauer, Harvard University; Arthur F. Wright, Stanford University; Harvey P. Hall, Middle East Institute; Shannon McCune, Colgate University; Vera M. Dean, Foreign Policy Association; Reginald Barrett, Nigeria Liaison Office; William Wade, Foreign Policy Association; and Quincy Howe, University of Illinois.

The format was similar to that used in the GREAT MEN-GREAT ISSUES series: films*, specially written background essays, and a discussion leader's guide. In addition, specially prepared outline wall maps of the countries and areas under consideration were employed.

The series opened with a program on world trade, and closed with a "summary" session on what might be done to further education for international understanding at the community level. The intervening eight programs dealt with India, Japan, China, Iran, Indonesia, Yugoslavia, Nigeria and Great Britain.**

Testing

Test groups were set up in two ways.

First, we organized and conducted seven groups as part of the Discussion Laboratory established in the Fund's headquarters in Pasadena. Three used GREAT MEN materials, four used the WORLD AFFAIRS. These employed different patterns of discussion leadership and were observed by members of the Fund.

Second, we invited a variety of adult education institutions and organizations in various parts of the country to form groups under their own auspices to try out the two programs and to report on them.

Ninety-one sponsoring agencies – including university extension divisions, evening colleges, public libraries, public schools, "Y's," women's clubs, service organizations, farm groups, community centers, and labor unions – accepted the invitation. They were located in 75 different communities in 30 states, ranging in size from small towns with a few thousand population, like Kennet, Missouri, to New York City. Every region in the country was represented.

There were 122 test groups, enrolling 3,390 participants. They ranged in size from eight to 50 members. In number, the average group was 26; the average attendance was 19. Seventy per cent of the participants in the GREAT MEN series and 58 per cent of those in the WORLD AFFAIRS program attended five or more sessions.

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*Of the ten 16 mm films finally selected, three were from Louis de Rochemont's "Earth and Its Peoples" series—distributed by United World Films: *Farmers of India*, *Oriental City* (Canton), and *Tropical Mountain Land* (Java). Three were March of Time films distributed through McGraw-Hill Text Films: *Iran in Crisis*, *Tito, Our Ally?* and *Japan and Democracy*. Two were British made: *Picture of Britain*, produced by the Crown Film Unit, and *Challenge in Nigeria*, a newsreel documentary produced by J. Arthur Rank Organization for its "Modern Age" series. The film used in the opening program—*World Trade for Better Living*—was produced and distributed by Encyclopaedia Britannica Films. The final program in the series introduced a new film—produced by Louis de Rochemont for the Cleveland World Affairs Council under a grant from The Fund for Adult Education—entitled *World Affairs Are Your Affairs*. This phrase, the slogan of the Cleveland Council, was eventually adopted as the title for this study-discussion series.

**This series turned out to be one of the most popular developed within the Project. In 1954 it was completely revised. Some changes were made in the "tension areas" considered; selected Foreign Policy Association "Headline Books" were used in place of specially prepared essays for background reading; film use was made optional, and program users were encouraged to make their own selections from a variety of recommended pictures. It must be reported, however, that the program in this revised format was not as well received as the original one. Some of the Headline Books used were not completely up-to-date, and in a field changing as rapidly as that of international relations this proved to be a serious handicap in their acceptance.

Discussion Leadership

The sponsoring agencies used leaders with varying degrees of experience, and several types of leadership patterns. They were asked to make a detailed report on what plan of discussion leadership was used and what training or experience (if any) the various leaders possessed.*

One hundred eight groups (66 GREAT MEN and 42 WORLD AFFAIRS) provided data on discussion leadership.

Previous Training or Experience of Leaders

Considerable:		
GREAT MEN	72	
WORLD AFFAIRS	72	
		144
Some:		
GREAT MEN	125	
WORLD AFFAIRS	128	
		253
No Training:		
GREAT MEN	110	
WORLD AFFAIRS	113	
		223
Total		620

Types of Leadership Patterns

One Leader Throughout Series:		
GREAT MEN	13	
WORLD AFFAIRS	8	
		21
Rotation of Single Leaders:		
GREAT MEN	22	
WORLD AFFAIRS	16	
		38
Single Set of Co-Leaders Throughout Series:		
GREAT MEN	8	
WORLD AFFAIRS	5	
		13
Rotation among Co-Leaders:		
GREAT MEN	23	
WORLD AFFAIRS	13	
		36
Total		108

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*The evaluation of the two programs included questionnaires for participants, leaders and group organizers. Sample forms are shown in Appendix B, pp. 113-118.

Summary of Findings

Appraisal of the reactions of participants, discussion leaders, and group organizers to their experience with the two programs led us to the following conclusions.

1. *That the film study-discussion course idea, as it was embodied in the two programs under consideration, provided a sound and acceptable way of learning for a substantial number of adults interested in continuing liberal education.*

It was given unqualified endorsement by eighty per cent of the group organizers for both of the experimental series, who, as we have seen, used the program under a variety of discussion leadership plans.

This judgment was supported by the participants' evaluations of the materials. They found the essay materials readable and interesting. Two-thirds of those taking part in the GREAT MEN groups, and three-fourths of those taking part in WORLD AFFAIRS groups, indicated they had read all the material in advance. The films, despite some criticism, were approved as important contributions to the discussion situation: 60 per cent of the GREAT MEN group members reported that the films had helped a great deal; 67 per cent of the WORLD AFFAIRS group members rated them either a great help (47 per cent) or essential (20 per cent).

Nine out of ten of the group discussion leaders in both series rated the leaders' guides as good to excellent.

2. *That, in the group discussion situation which the program materials helped to set up, relatively untrained leaders could function well enough to bring out fruitful discussion.*

This was the conclusion of 80 per cent of the group organizers.

This conclusion was supported by the fact that the members of groups with relatively untrained discussion leaders rated the quality of their leadership as high as did members of groups with trained leaders. Attendance in groups with untrained leaders held up as well as in groups with trained leaders. Participation in groups with untrained leaders was as high as in groups with trained leaders.

3. *That the use of films in connection with these programs tended to attract and to hold adult participants who would not otherwise have enrolled in the course.*

Many of the leaders and organizers stated on their evaluation forms that the showing of the films was "the dominant motive in bringing many out." Some said they "couldn't have held the discussions without films . . ."; ". . . they provided common experience and information out of which discussion develops."

Organizers of the few groups in which the educational level of the members was comparatively low made a special point of noting that the films were indispensable to the discussions. One of them remarked, "While there was a feeling that the film did not always tell a great deal, it had a tendency to dramatize the material and was of particular help to visual-minded people . . ."

Encouraged by our experience in the use of films, we then set about experimenting with other subjects and "properties." The next chapter deals with four programs using recordings.

Separate programs fall into "clusters" within a common area of concern. Shown here are five, focused on aspects of the political process: Great Issues in American Politics; The Power to Govern; You and Your Community; Transition and Tension in Southeast Asia; Jefferson and Our Times.

MASTER COMPARATOR
YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY
AVERAGE SCHOOL SALARY
EXPENDITURE PER PUPIL 1950
YEARS SCHOOLING ADULT POP
COMMUNITY CHEST SUBSCRIBERS
GENERAL HOSPITAL BEDS
DOCTORS PER 1000
PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES per 5000
PUPILS PER TEACHERS
POPULATION OVER 16 YRS
VOTING AGE POPULATION
CHURCH MEMBERSHIP
MALE EMPLOYEES
FEMALE EMPLOYEES
UNEMPLOYED
YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY
YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY
GREAT ISSUES IN AMERICAN POLITICS
Jefferson and Our Times
and Our Times

Chapter Three

EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMS WITH RECORDS

Following the favorable reception accorded its first year of preparation and testing of programs, the Project set about creating a range of programs around a variety of subjects, using different combinations of print and audio-visual materials.

Four of the study-discussion programs developed in the following two years were built around recordings adapted from several series prepared for educational radio broadcasting. Since these radio series determined the nature and scope of the study-discussion programs adapted from them, the story begins with an account of how broadcast programs came into existence.

From its founding, The Fund for Adult Education had considered experimentation in the use of radio and television a promising means for stimulating and developing liberal adult education. At the first meeting of the Directors in April 1951, a grant to the National Association of Educational Broadcasters was approved – for a project to develop five series of programs in the areas of international understanding, community self-help, public affairs and/or political education, the study of man, and the American heritage.

The project was administered by the Adult Education Committee of the N.A.E.B. Its plan was "to bring together the finest minds in the country and the most competent communication skills in delineating and producing programs of educational significance." The Committee held planning meetings for each of the main subject-matter areas under consideration.

The Jeffersonian Heritage, the first released for broadcast, consisted of 13 half-hour programs prepared under the direction of Dumas Malone, professor of history at Columbia University and nationally known authority on Jefferson's life and works. This series was built around selected dramatic incidents in Jefferson's life. Scripts were written by Morton Wishengrad, Joseph Mindel, Milton Geiger and George Probst. The dramatizations were performed by a cast of professional actors headed by Claude Rains, who played Jefferson.

The series of broadcasts on social anthropology, entitled *Ways of Mankind* and developed under the general technical directorship of Walter Goldschmidt, Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of California at Los Angeles, also consisted of 13 half-hour programs. The programs were produced in Canada at the Canadian Broadcasting Company facilities, under the direction of Andrew Allan. Another "sequel" series of 13 programs was later commissioned, and released as *Ways of Mankind II.* This was the third series to which we refer.

The fourth series of programs prepared under the grant to the National Association of Educational Broadcasters was entitled *People Under Communism.* The group responsible for the preparation of this series of programs was headed by Philip Mosely, then director of the Russian Institute at Columbia University. Frank Papp directed program production. The series consisted of five one-hour dramatic programs dealing with salient aspects of Soviet culture: the arts, industry, the secret police, methods of propagandizing, foreign populations.

The Experimental Discussion Project decided to construct study-discussion programs around selections from all four of these programs.

The rest of this chapter will review briefly the way each of these programs was developed, and consider some of the things learned as a result.

JEFFERSON AND OUR TIMES

In order to distinguish it from the radio series, we gave the study-discussion program the title, JEFFERSON AND OUR TIMES. Dumas Malone, the consultant in the development of the original radio series, was retained to plan the development of the study-discussion program and to supply supplementary reading materials.

"Our original purpose," wrote Malone in a note on how the original radio series was prepared, "was ideological rather than biographical . . . Thomas Jefferson was seized upon as the best personification and symbol of certain ideas which are characteristic of the American – though most of them may also be regarded as universal – and which are still of vital importance to our own country and the whole free world in the unending struggle against totalitarianism . . . What we are concerned with are the enduring ideas that are best summed up in the Declaration of Independence, among American historic documents, and best embodied in and symbolized by Thomas Jefferson as an individual. We want to present these ideas as they were in the beginning, are now, and (we hope) ever shall be with the necessary adjustment to changing conditions."

Ten of the radio transcriptions were selected from *The Jeffersonian Heritage* series for use in the study-discussion series.

Malone began work in the summer of 1953, and preparation of the materials was completed by the end of that year.

The recordings were to be used in the groups. For each participant there were two items: first, a book of scripts of the radio series,* and second, a participant's manual containing (a) an outline; (b) historical notes and relevant documents; (c) questions for discussion; and (d) a brief bibliography of supplementary readings. For the leaders there was a brief guide.

The materials were tried out in 22 test groups in the spring of 1955 and evaluated in a manner similar to that used to test the two film programs.

The program was well received, and it was published – with relatively few changes in the original manuscript – in the fall of 1955.

WAYS OF MANKIND

The second record-based study-discussion program was developed around ten selected programs from the radio series, *Ways of Mankind.* Walter Goldschmidt, consultant for this series, prepared the background reading materials.

In an early memorandum on the radio series, Goldschmidt outlined the general purpose of the *Ways of Mankind* project as follows: "to define

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**The Jeffersonian Heritage*, edited, and with an introduction, by Dumas Malone. Boston: Beacon Press, 1954.

the nature of human social behavior, to appreciate the varieties of behavior that are known to anthropology, and insofar as possible, to develop a systematic understanding of the character of culture in society. Underlining this purpose is a broader one — that it is necessarily better to understand the ways of mankind in order to achieve peace and unity in the world, and that this understanding must necessarily start with ourselves.

"The whole series will therefore be devoted to an analysis of human behavior, taking materials of the various known cultures of the world, including our own . . . The year's program can only make a beginning, but ultimately enough can be included to make a true course in social anthropology, including allied social science fields and their broader aspects. The first set of the more broadly conceived programs will . . . dramatize the meaning of the basic conceptual tools of the sciences of anthropology and sociology . . .

"In preparing the scripts we tried to emphasize ideas . . ."

The ideas selected for treatment in the study-discussion series included culture itself, language, technology, education, values, groups, family, ethics, authority, status and role, arts, religion, and, finally, society.

The discussion possibilities implicit in this series of radio program were, as we have already noted, immediately apparent to the members of the Project staff. These possibilities also suggested themselves to several other people about the same time. The Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults created a course around it.* Southwestern at Memphis planned and conducted a radio-discussion program around it. But the most significant venture designed to adapt the *Ways of Mankind* to adult discussion groups was conducted in San Bernardino, California, where the Community Education Project was under way at the San Bernardino Valley College under the direction of Eugene Johnson. Here is Johnson's account of the origin and development of this experiment:

"The main purpose was to test the feasibility of coordinating a series of educational radio broadcasts with a parallel series of newspaper feature stories, and with a large number of listening groups meeting in informal discussion sessions in private homes, churches, schools, and other suitable places . . . The experiment was designed to find out whether the number of study-discussion groups in the community could be rapidly increased, and the cost of servicing them with adequate resource material reduced, by

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*This course was put together by Harry Miller and tried out in cooperation with the University of Chicago's downtown center. Miller's course included the use of a wide selection of readings, and the recordings in some instances were supplemented with films. Materials were later put into a discussion guide on *Ways of Mankind* and issued by the Center in 1953.

utilizing radio (and television where available) and the local newspapers."*

In the wake of the San Bernardino experiment, the Fund's Experimental Discussion Project staff decided to see what could be done about adapting some of the materials used in this experiment to the "regular" study-discussion situation, where recordings would take the place of the radio broadcast.

The number of programs was raised to ten. Goldschmidt's original essays prepared for the newspaper, somewhat revised, were bound into a pamphlet. A discussion leader's guide was prepared. The program was tried out in 20 experimental discussion groups in the fall of 1953. The reactions of these groups to the program were favorable. In the following year the program was released in published form.

Each record for the series was further adapted for discussion use by the addition of introductory comments suggesting issues to be looked for, and closing comments posing a specific question for discussion.

Participant's materials for the program included (1) a 43-page manual containing the short articles by Goldschmidt; (2) a companion volume "Ways of Mankind"** containing scripts of all 13 radio dramas, some supplementary essays, and other related material; and (3) a discussion leader's guide.

When the program was later released as part of the Test Center Project under university and college auspices (to be discussed in Part Two), which involved a fee for participation, complaints began to come in that the materials for the course were too skimpy. Goldschmidt was commissioned to prepare an entirely new set of readings for the series of programs. In the spring of 1957, a new participant's manual was brought out in two volumes,

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*The chief features of this experiment were the selection of nine of the 13 original programs of the *Ways of Mankind* series for broadcast over a local station, KFXM.

Dr. Walter Goldschmidt wrote special newspaper articles providing background information on each of the programs, which were printed in the San Bernardino *Sun Telegram* the evening before and the morning of the broadcast of the programs.

The Community Education Project then organized as many informal discussion groups as possible, usually based on "friendship patterns," without a trained leader, to carry on discussion following these broadcasts. Here, as Mr. Johnson points out, the chief concern was to learn whether groups would voluntarily form to engage in discussion, and if so, whether they could be successful.

Johnson and his staff, after two months of preparation, began this venture on Thursday, April 16, 1953.

At a preview held in the Valley College auditorium, a large crowd heard a general explanation of the nature of this new discussion group experiment, listened to Goldschmidt describe the purpose of the *Ways of Mankind* series, and watched an on-stage demonstration of an informal "home discussion group." The audience then broke up into small "buzz" groups of six or eight persons to talk over problems that might be encountered in establishing a home discussion group. Manuals were distributed giving details and instructions on how to organize such a home discussion group; and persons intending to organize groups were invited to register at once.

Ninety-seven discussion groups were formed.

Group leaders were called together twice by the project director to exchange experiences and analyze difficulties they were encountering in their groups. Each week the project office sent a variety of materials to each group including discussion guides, evaluation sheets, and summaries of the most interesting reactions from groups on the preceding week's program.

"Almost 200 people," reports Johnson, "attended a final meeting for the *Ways of Mankind* discussion group experiment in mid-June. The attendance was large for that time of year and the great enthusiasm of those present indicated that the experiment had been a success."

A full account of the San Bernardino project is contained in *The Community Education Project: A Four-Year Report, 1952-1956* by Eugene I. Johnson, published in October 1957 by the San Bernardino Valley College, San Bernardino. California.

**"Ways of Mankind," edited, and with commentary, by Walter Goldschmidt, Boston; Beacon Press, 1954.

totalling 370 pages, and consisting largely of selected readings. A year later the Project issued a new discussion leader's guide prepared by John Walker Powell, who became consultant editor for the Project in 1956. It contained synopses of the various recordings, suggestions for handling and relating the various content sessions in the program, and a number of discussion questions.*

WAYS TO JUSTICE

As noted earlier, the first series of radio programs on *Ways of Mankind* proved so successful that the experts who prepared it, headed by Goldschmidt, were commissioned to prepare a second series along the same lines illustrating other important concepts in social anthropology. The first set of six programs in this new series was entitled "Problems of Law and Justice."

The Project staff thought that fewer than nine or ten programs provided the participants with too short an educational experience. However, we had received many requests from adult education directors for a "short course." They did not argue that it would be desirable to have all of the programs of this length, but thought that one or two, limited to six meetings, might get some people to participate who would not commit themselves for the longer series. The "Problems of Law and Justice" sequence in the new *Ways of Mankind* series seemed to fill this bill. The titles of the new programs were sprightly: "The Case of the Borrowed Wife," "The Case of the Bamboo Pigs," "The Repentant Horsethief," "Lion Bites Man," "The Forbidden Name of Wednesday," and "Laying Down the Law." Five of these were case histories, each a dramatic account of the origin, development, and ultimate settlement of a dispute as handled in a primitive culture. "We believe," wrote Goldschmidt, in an introduction to the series of programs, "that through an examination of legal cases in these far-off places we are best helped to understand legal problems in the modern world."

The process of developing this radio series into a study-discussion series was similar to that followed in developing the original *Ways of Mankind* program. Introductions and follow-up questions were placed on the recordings. Dr. Goldschmidt prepared brief essays to be read in advance of the discussion meetings, together with suggested questions for discussion. In this program, the script for each record was bound into the participant's volume immediately after the introductory essays. Although preliminary testing of the new series drew mixed reactions, enough were favorable so

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*The earlier version, without readings, is the one described and used by Abbott Kaplan in his 1956 research; the later revision, by Richard J. Hill in his 1958 study of lecture and discussion methods. Kaplan, *Study-Discussion in the Liberal Arts;* Hill, *A Comparative Study of Lecture and Discussion Methods.* STUDIES IN ADULT GROUP LEARNING IN THE LIBERAL ARTS.—ed. note.

that the program was published and made available for limited distribution in the fall of 1955.

LIFE UNDER COMMUNISM

Of all the radio programs projected by the National Association of Educational Broadcasters under the Fund grant, none appeared more potentially useful for study-discussion purposes than the one on the Soviet Union.

In a memorandum prepared for the Association's Adult Education Committee in the summer of 1952, Philip Mosely wrote, "It was never more urgent than now to have a widely informed, alert, and responsible body of public opinion." What the public needs, he contended, is "to know more clearly the nature of the Soviet regime and its intentions . . . a thoughtful analysis of the way in which this regime functions."

The original plan had been to do a series of short 15-minute broadcasts, but after several conferences this plan was changed. Each of the five experts[*] employed to work on the series was assigned the responsibility of developing a one-hour program, in collaboration with first-rate script writers.

The series made its debut in December of 1952. It was immediately acclaimed by critics as an important and distinguished contribution to international understanding.[**]

As soon as the staff of the Experimental Discussion Project had listened to the recordings, however, we knew that there were going to be serious difficulties in adapting the radio programs to study-discussion purposes. In the first place was their length; it was highly doubtful that many discussion groups would sit still for that long a "preparation" for discussion. In the second place was the question of whether or not there was enough controversy implicit in the programs to get people to think and talk: Was this material as it had been developed for the radio project *discussible?*

Nevertheless, we decided to try, providing food for discussion in supplementary readings and appropriate questions.

Philip Mosely was engaged as chief consultant on the development of the discussion program, with the other experts who had worked with him on the radio programs preparing the necessary supplementary reading materials for the new series. To distinguish the discussion series from the original radio program the name "People Under Communism" was changed to LIFE UNDER COMMUNISM.

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[*] Merle Fainsod, Professor of Government, Harvard University; Alex Inkeles, Lecturer in Social Relations, Harvard University; Ernest J. Simmons, Professor, Russian Literature, Columbia University; Harold Fisher, Hoover Institute and Library, Stanford University; and Philip Mosely.

[**] A reviewer in *Variety* (December 10, 1952) called the program "an adult, serious series, with little or no concession to the frivolous or superficial hearer . . . prepared with great care, under supervision of authorities, and presented with imagination and skill, (it) assumes importance as top radio programming as well as a first-rate public service."

At the 17th Annual American Exhibition of Educational and TV Programs sponsored by the Institute for Education by Radio and TV at Ohio State, this series won the first award for furthering international understanding.

It was decided that the recordings to be used should not be over a half-hour in length. This meant selections from the five one-hour programs.* Arrangements were made with the National Broadcasting Company in Chicago (Recording Division) to re-record the excerpts on discs. The approved scripts were then made into LP recordings. Background essays were prepared for each of the sessions.** By February 1953 the new series was ready for a field test. It consisted of ten sessions.***

Group Reactions

Twenty test groups were organized in various parts of the country to try out the experimental materials for this program. About 300 people participated in the test. Many of them had been involved in one or more previous experimental discussion programs. Procedures followed were much the same as those used in testing the WAYS OF MANKIND series, described earlier. The composition of the groups was also much the same. Again, several approaches to discussion leadership were followed: three of the groups employed rotation of leaders among members of the groups; three employed "subject matter experts"; the rest employed either single, trained discussion leaders or trained co-leaders.

Examination of the evaluations supplied by participants, leaders, and group organizers revealed immediately two major reactions. The first was endorsement of the *idea* behind the development of this series; there was general agreement that the subject was of first importance for adults, and that the information supplied in the materials used in the programs contributed to a broader understanding of the nature of the Soviet system of power. But there was also an expression of strong disappointment in the *structure* of the series itself and the materials supplied to support it as a proper basis for a *discussion* program on this subject.

Criticisms focused upon the following four points:

First, only a third of the participants felt that the records made any substantial contribution as a basis for the discussion. While no one questioned the facts that were supplied, many hinted that they were selected to give a dark picture of Communism. There was a strong feeling that the recordings sacrificed a balanced presentation of the facts to the demands of dramatic presentation, and that as a consequence they were over-emotional and "propagandistic" in effect.

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*The original one-hour programs were entitled, respectively: *Art to Order, Terror as a System of Power, The Men Who Make The Migs, The Music and the Dream, Pattern of World Conquest.* They are available from the N.A.E.B., Washington, D. C.

**Each of the five consultants prepared one of the essays: Gene Sosin, a Ph.D. candidate at Columbia University's Russian Institute, and Alexander Dallin, Associate Director, Research Program on the USSR, prepared the other essays, working under appropriate experts.

****The Soviet Union: An Overview; Drama Under Communism; Terror as a System of Power; Life in a Soviet Factory; Music Under Communism; Literature Under Communism; Communism Comes to Czechoslovakia; An Introduction to Red China; Background of the Struggle for Iran; Democracy Versus Communism.*

Second, there was criticism of the inadequate correlation between the recordings and the essays. One participant wrote, "While the episodes of the recording arouse interest and give some dimension of reality to the topic, they tend to detract from the larger range of problems presented in the essays. It is difficult to achieve focus and dimension, and there is insufficient tie-in between the recordings and other materials." On the whole, the essays came off better than the recordings as useful materials for discussion. Since they were necessarily supplementary materials, they suffered from the same deficiencies that many participants found in the recordings themselves. However, they too came in for criticism as being "too brief," "not factual enough."

The third major criticism of this series centered around the specific topics selected for attention. Much of the dissatisfaction of participants in the course lay in their feeling that many important aspects of life in the Soviet Union were given no attention at all. "Why," some asked, "were there no sessions devoted to science, education, agriculture, and other important subjects vital to a true understanding of the workings of any national system, when three sessions were devoted to the arts alone?" Others thought that the series would have been more satisfactory if it had confined itself to giving attention to the internal workings of the Soviet Union and had not attempted – within this one series, at any rate – to cover "methods of external conquest."

The fourth major criticism of the series related to the failure to provide any material on the theory of Communism as a social philosophy. "How," one participant asked, "can you expect a group to discuss and evaluate the practical effects of the application of Communism in a country, without some understanding of the theory of Communism itself?"

The members of the Project staff found it significant that the groups reporting the most successful experience with the experimental program were those in which experts on Russia were either group leaders or participants. The program obviously required the participation of people who were knowledgeable in the subject, and even when this was the case, the framework for the series revealed inadequacies which could not be remedied without a complete revision. This was impossible under the circumstances (the radio programs had already been produced and could not be redone without great expense), so further work on this program was suspended.

As we reflect on the experience, the major difficulty with the LIFE UNDER COMMUNISM series, apart from the inadequacy of the structure mentioned above, was that the recorded programs concentrated their attack on the emotions and did very little to stimulate the mind. The dramatic devices used to gain attention, while admirably calculated to enhance their appeal and effectiveness as radio broadcasts, tended to obscure rather than to illuminate issues for discussion. They simply did not stimulate thought. Many of the most powerful, dramatic programs left in their wake feelings either of indignation or depression, moods not calculated to evoke productive discussion.

Another point is that, like the materials of WORLD AFFAIRS ARE YOUR AFFAIRS, some of the materials of LIFE UNDER COMMUNISM were soon to become dated.

Two important lessons were learned from the experience on the LIFE UNDER COMMUNISM program: (1) information by itself is not enough for a series of discussion programs; (2) dramatic recordings which have the effect of making a case for or against something can arouse suspicion and even hostility among members of a group of people gathered together for thoughtful and objective exploration of issues. In a discussion there must always be room for controversy. "Where is the other side?" is the inevitable question.

* * * * *

Summary

Of the four study-discussion programs based upon adaptations of educational radio program recordings, two could be considered quite successful. These were the programs based on *Ways of Mankind* and *The Jeffersonian Heritage.*

One, WAYS TO JUSTICE, based on six programs from the second *Ways of Mankind* series, while inadequate in length, could be said to be moderately successful. The fourth, LIFE UNDER COMMUNISM, has to be counted a failure.

The experiment with the four series of programs demonstrated beyond doubt the feasibility of using recordings as an integral part of a study-discussion series. Where recordings are first-rate and deal with ideas – particularly with the interaction of ideas and people – in a dramatic way, they constitute welcome and usable materials for group study-discussion. Furthermore, where scripts of the recorded productions are available for individual use at the time they are played in the groups, so that participants can both read and hear, the process of communication of ideas and information is sharply enhanced.

There is no doubt that study-discussion programs using recordings would be immensely improved if the recordings could be originally developed for study-discussion rather than for broadcasting.

Chapter Four

THE EXPERIMENT BROADENS

Exploring the possibilities of study-discussion groups led by lay leaders and using packaged programs, the Experimental Discussion Project had tried films (Chapter Two) and recordings (Chapter Three) as supplements to reading. Both trials were encouraging, but both were handicapped by having to use supplements originally produced for purposes other than study-discussion. The next step in the experiment was to broaden the range of subject matters, to multiply the kinds of "properties" used to supplement reading, and to produce or assemble properties specifically designed for the purpose.

One important difference between the first six programs and all the subsequent programs was that the latter had new materials developed especially for study-discussion.

There was another important difference. In the first six programs the basic decisions affecting their formats, as well as the subjects, were all made by the Project staff. In planning all but one of the remaining 16 discussion programs initiated under the Project, the making of basic decisions about both content and materials was delegated to the experts charged with preparing the programs, who were not members of the Fund's staff.

Eight were developed by grants to, or contracts with, *institutions;* the others, through arrangements with *individuals* as independent consultants. In every case, the person or persons developing an experimental program began by holding a series of conferences with the Project staff, exploring the objectives of the Project and the problems involved.

Next the program developer would outline for staff scrutiny a "treatment" of the proposed discussion program, its general structure, sub-topics, types of materials required, etc. Sometimes a complete "session" was prepared as a model. After this outline was discussed and any changes agreed upon, a budget was fixed and a date set for completion.

The period of preparation varied from program to program, depending on the difficulties presented by the subject and the time the authors were able to give to the programs. (In nearly all instances they could release only a part of their time to this undertaking.) Usually from 12 to 18 months were required to complete the preparation and testing of a given program. Where (as in some instances) more than one version of a program was undertaken, the period was considerably longer. (The series on modern painting, for example, took more than four years in the making.)

During the preparatory period, Project staff members frequently consulted with the program authors and often argued for changes which they felt to be desirable. But, in the last analysis, the basic decisions were made by the authors of the program.

Methods of selection and presentation of materials for any specific program were, of course, influenced by the nature of the subject and the personal predilections of those responsible for its development. But the goal in all cases was the same: to present essential information about selected concepts or issues in a way useful to adults for study and group discussion.

The Contents of the Study-Discussion Program Package

For every program there were materials for the individual participant, materials for the group, and aids to discussion leaders.

Participants' materials were readings, either specially prepared or selected. Sometimes – for example, in the series AGING IN THE MODERN WORLD – they were a combination of both. This program's "Handbook for Group Members" contained a book of specially prepared essays and a book of selected Readings on Aging.

Group materials varied in number and kind from topic to topic. Audio-visual properties were used, not to explore their possibilities, but only when appropriate to supplement the readings.

Leaders' guides were prepared for all discussion programs, because of the volunteer discussion leader's need for aids. They were designed to provide:

1. A brief orientation in the discussion leader's functions and some suggestions as to how to perform them.
2. A brief description of the audio-visual aids (where there were such) and suggestions on how to use them.
3. Suggested "remarks" that inexperienced leaders might use in opening the discussion period, pertinent questions to focus discussion, and reminders of major themes and relationships.

In the four record-based programs described in Chapter Three, the material designed for the leaders was included also in the materials designed for the participants. It seemed desirable for *all* group members to have access to all the information that was available. However, as the experiment progressed, it became apparent that in a majority of the groups "shared leadership" was not practiced. The preference grew for the separation of the leader's guide from the participant's manual. Volunteer leaders wanted special and exclusive help in fulfilling their assignments, and most group members were not interested in the problems of the leaders. Therefore, in the later programs prepared under the Project, extensive separately-bound guides for leaders were prepared.

In general, the plan used in testing (described in Chapter Two) was followed in subsequent programs. The number of test groups was reduced as time went on, because a few well-selected and closely observed groups were found to give as reliable an evaluation as many groups remotely spaced.

Summary

Now let us summarize the work of program development in the Experimental Discussion Project.

From June 1951 to the fall of 1958, the Project was responsible, directly or indirectly, for the preparation of study-discussion programs on 21 different subjects.*

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*Actually 35 different *programs* were prepared in the Project. Some of these were versions of the same program idea (three were developed around modern painting alone). Others were complete revisions of original programs (INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANITIES was twice revised). In the case of PARENTHOOD IN A FREE NATION, five separate "follow-up" programs were prepared to supplement the original basic course.

We have described six of the programs in the two previous chapters. Brief descriptions of the rest of the programs will be found in Appendix (A) to this Report (pp. 93 to 112).

One, TRANSITION AND TENSION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, was designed as a possible follow-up program to the earlier WORLD AFFAIRS ARE YOUR AFFAIRS. A new series of programs, GREAT ISSUES IN AMERICAN POLITICS, was prepared as a replacement for the earlier GREAT MEN AND GREAT ISSUES. And a series on the separation of powers in American government, entitled THE POWER TO GOVERN, was in effect a sequel to the earlier series.

Two programs dealt with economics: YOUR MONEY AND YOUR LIFE, an exploration of the relationship between the concepts of inflation and taxation, and ECONOMIC REASONING, which used the notion of the gross national product as an approach to an understanding of such phenomena as fluctuating business cycles, debt, monetary policy, etc.

Seven may be classified as programs in the "social affairs" area: PARENTHOOD IN A FREE NATION,* YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY, THE NEW MASS MEDIA, THE SHAPE OF OUR CITIES, HUMAN FREEDOM, EDUCATION FOR A FREE SOCIETY, and AGING IN THE MODERN WORLD. Four were prepared in the field of the humanities: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANITIES,** LOOKING AT MODERN PAINTING, DISCOVERING MODERN POETRY, and SHAKESPEARE AND HIS THEATRE.

Following a try-out in experimental form, 14 of these programs, in revised form, were made available for use in the Fund's Test Center Project, described in another part of this Report. These 14 were:

Great Men and Great Issues in Our American Heritage
 (replaced in 1956 with Great Issues in American Politics)
World Affairs Are Your Affairs
Economic Reasoning
Ways of Mankind
Ways to Justice
An Introduction to the Humanities
The Power to Govern
Looking at Modern Painting
Discovering Modern Poetry
Parenthood in a Free Nation

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*This program, made possible by a Fund grant to the University of Chicago, creating the Parent Education Project, was developed and tested under the direction of Ethel Kawin. Because it involved a unique approach to group discussion, it will be made the subject of a separate report to be issued later.

**The Fund financed two other discussion programs in the field of the humanities. One was prepared by the Humanities Department of Stephens College for use with its alumnae. The other, entitled AVENUES TO THE ARTS, was prepared in 1959 by the American Foundation for Continuing Education.

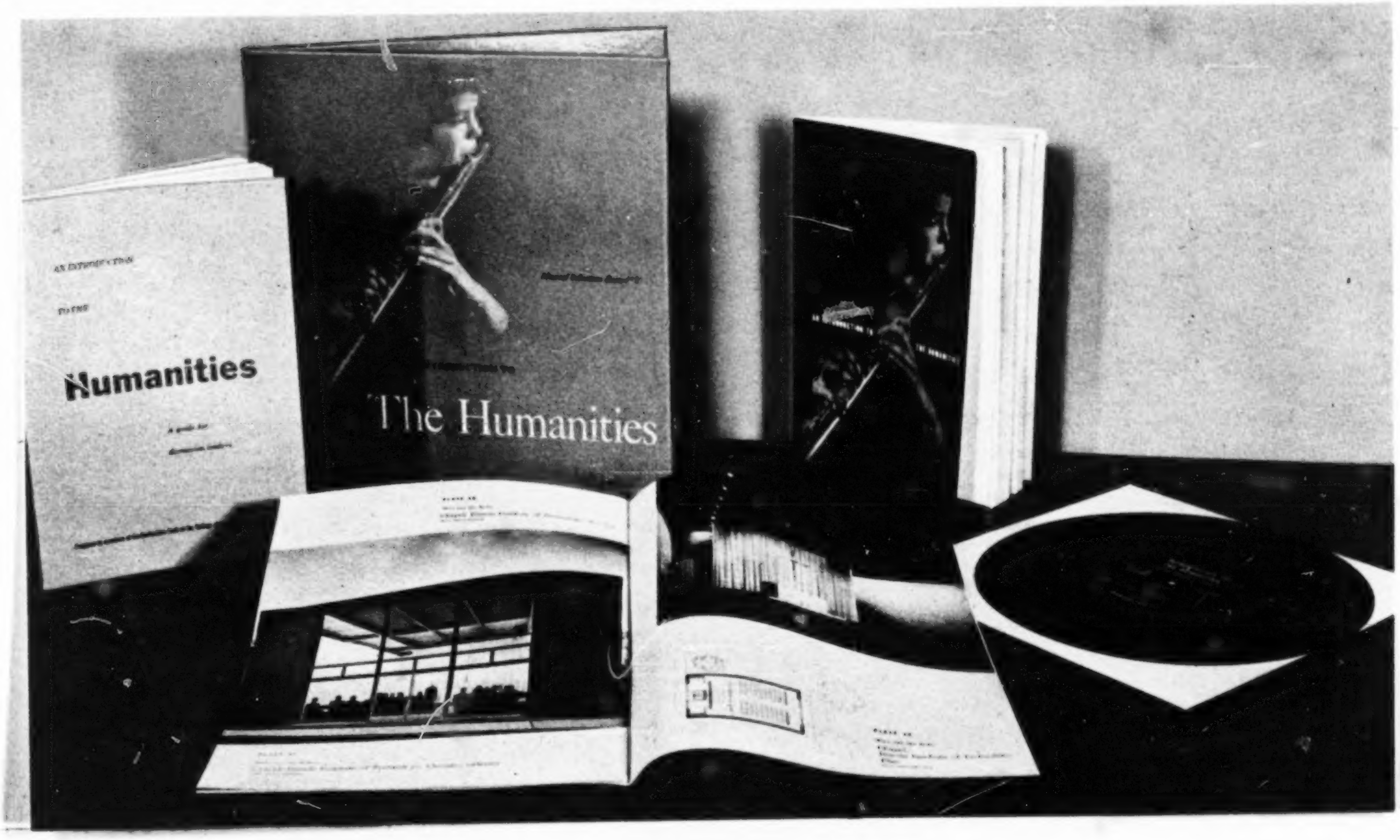
You and Your Community
Aging in the Modern World
Transition and Tension in Southeast Asia
Jefferson and Our Times

Work on four of the experimental programs – HUMAN FREEDOM, LIFE UNDER COMMUNISM, EDUCATION FOR A FREE SOCIETY, and YOUR MONEY AND YOUR LIFE – was indefinitely suspended following their group testing. Three others – THE SHAPE OF OUR CITIES, THE NEW MASS MEDIA, and SHAKESPEARE AND HIS THEATRE – are now being reviewed and revised prior to publication.

Quite apart from the larger implications of the Experimental Discussion Project, this venture in study-discussion program development constitutes the most ambitious undertaking of its kind ever attempted.

The individual programs that emerged from it may properly be looked upon as by-products of investigation of a new field. Like all by-products, some turned out to be more useful, more popular, than others. But even those which in the end proved unusable contributed to the advancement of the total experiment; we learned from each one.

This series, An Introduction to the Humanities, *combines experiences with poetry, narrative, painting, architecture, and music, with discussion of forms and values in the "humane arts and letters."*



Chapter Five

SOME CONCLUSIONS ABOUT PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The whole Experimental Discussion Project can be described as an exploration into the development and use of a new tool for continuing liberal adult education: the so-called packaged study-discussion program.

This part of the Report on that project has been about program development: how the various topics were chosen; the various ways in which the topics selected were translated into programs; the way in which the programs were tested, revised and evaluated. What did we learn?

Toward an Adult Curriculum?

As we look back over the wide range of subjects around which discussion programs were built, we are sorely tempted to say that we think we can see emerging the outlines of a curriculum for liberal adult education.

It is true that the very idea of a curriculum for adult education has long been protested by most adult educators, and for good reasons: it suggests an extension of formal education into an area whose essence is conceived of as informality; it suggests that certain subjects are more important than others; it suggests that the adult educator is, or should be, in a position to know what adults should give their attention to.

Education for adults, it is pointed out, differs from education for children and young people in that it is carried on as a part-time activity by people who are engaged in the ordinary business of life. It is assumed that they are independent, responsible and capable of making rational choices. The logical corollary is that adults who participate, or who want to participate, in continuing education — and not the adult educators — should determine what educational activities are to be offered. If there could be said to be a curriculum for adult education, it would be simply what would be offered in response to what adults want.

This is a persuasive theory. It is under attack today, partly as a result of criticism of the educational system in general, but more particularly because it has resulted in an obviously unbalanced program of adult education offerings in nearly every American community.

It has long been recognized that, in this age of social crisis and rapid, unsettling change, continuing education of adults is not only desirable but also essential. What is new in our present situation is that we are beginning to recognize that *some learnings have greater importance than others,* both to individuals, who share a common humanity, and to citizens, who share common responsibilities in a democracy.

We are beginning to suspect that maybe, after all, there *is* such a thing as a curriculum of adult education for those who want to live responsibly in a free society, and that the adult educator has a responsibility to take leadership in its development.

In such a curriculum, what we have called liberal adult education is necessarily a central element because it focuses on the development of the individual as a person and as a self-governing citizen. In the Experimental Discussion Project we elected to develop study-discussion programs around topics of major importance to the individual in these two essential roles. While, taken together, they could not be said even to suggest a "curriculum" in the strict sense, they represented topics important to all intelligent people, demonstrated a range and variety in approach and subject matter, and indicated the possibility of establishing inter-relationships among programs.

Let us illustrate. INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANITIES invited participants to undertake a quick exploration of the concept of "the humanities." LOOKING AT MODERN PAINTING and DISCOVERING MODERN POETRY directed attention to contemporary work in two important areas within the broad field of the humanities. Each program was developed independently and each stood on its own feet, yet the three were interrelated. GREAT ISSUES IN AMERICAN POLITICS, to take an example in another field, directs attention to ten issues of contemporary and historical interest to American citizens. In THE POWER TO GOVERN, ten sessions are devoted to the examination of one issue: the problem posed by the ambiguity surrounding the relationship in our form of government of the judicial, executive, and legislative branches.

A study-discussion program "curriculum" for liberal adult education should be loosely conceived, and should embrace as wide a range of topics as possible, treated in a variety of different ways. These topics should be important enough to warrant the attention of people capable of serious reading, reflection and discussion, who want to improve their capacity for critical thinking and increase their understanding of themselves, their fellows, and the world around them.

About what should citizens of a free society be informed and thoughtful? A list of areas might look something like this:

1. The structure, nature, and behavior of human societies, particularly our own, and the major social problems of our time;
2. The nature of the political process by which we are governed: its history, key documents, and enduring problems;
3. The major principles underlying the operation of the economic system in which we earn our living, particularly as it relates to the maintenance of a free society;
4. The peoples and problems of other nations of the world; their political, economic, and social ideas; their relations with one another and with our own country;
5. Increased awareness of ourselves as individuals; how our minds, our emotions, and our bodies work; the insights of science, philosophy, and religion concerning the ancient query, "What is Man?"
6. The humanities, not only for their value in acquainting us with the great traditions of both eastern and western culture, but also for the light they can throw on the nature of human life in contemporary society;
7. The role played by science and by scientific thinking in our time, and the problems that are posed by the technology it has made possible.

After the decisions to have a program in a certain area of subject matter, and to select a person to develop the program, have been made, then the ball is thrown to the program developer.

The Program Developer

Whatever process is to be used in the selection of a topic, once the decision is made, a single individual should be in charge of its development.

In any given program, the structure of the series itself and the materials that are supplied to support it are, in part, a substitute for a qualified teacher. Just as a good teacher's background of learning, point of view, and attitude toward the learning process must condition his own handling of the course he is presenting, so a given study-discussion series must successfully represent a consistent approach to the learning process. The good teacher is a creative person. Similarly, the conception and development of a series of programs on any given topic constitute a creative act.

Subject specialists differ, not only in the way they might rate important concepts in their special fields, but also in the amount of emphasis each would give to the concepts chosen for attention. Any series of programs, therefore, must give evidence of internal consistency; there must be a well-wrought relationship among the individual sessions within the series.

Let us illustrate. The program ECONOMIC REASONING was an attempt to help adults get at the working of our economic system through an examination of the concept of the gross national product. By devoting various sessions within the series to other important related concepts — debt, fluctuations in the business cycle, monetary policy, etc. — it invited those who participated in the series to understand better the relationships these concepts have to each other and to the central idea of the program.

To select from a field of knowledge a few basic concepts and issues on which to build a series of programs and to arrange these in a sequence meaningful for discussion purposes; to select, prepare, or have prepared the necessary background materials; and to suggest the methods by which the concepts may be approached in discussion — these are all matters for which one individual can best be responsible.

This is not to say that every program should be developed single-handedly. Some of the most successful programs prepared in the Project were collaborative efforts, where the individual responsible worked closely with one or more colleagues. And, of course, when he works alone he needs to test his ideas with many people, and to get assistance in the preparation or selection of materials where needed. But the good discussion program, like the good teacher, should bear the indelible stamp of an individual creative mind.

The program developer must be thoroughly familiar with the subject field in which the program will be developed. Also, he should have had some experience with, and be sympathetic to, the group discussion method. Unless he is, he will be under a heavy handicap in planning and preparing materials for the series of programs.

Perhaps the most important qualification for a program developer to possess, aside from expertness in the subject field, is that quality of mind which enables him to suspend his own conclusions and be willing to represent fairly views with which he does not agree. Many subject matter experts become the prisoners of their own conclusions. Having labored to develop informed opinions about a specific field of inquiry, they come to believe that to transmit these in capsules to learners in a discussion group is the very essence of education.

If the program developer is an expert in a field of subject-matter but is unfamiliar with the discussion method, he should bring in someone to collaborate with him. If he is not an established authority in the field in which the program is being developed, he should arrange to get his material checked by one or more people who are recognized experts.*

Structure, Scope, and Treatment

Once an individual accepts an assignment to develop a series of study-discussion programs, he faces a whole set of related decisions.

1. He must decide, in delimiting the topic assigned, what aspects of it are discussible.
2. He must decide whether he will build the series of programs around significant *concepts* for people to understand or *issues* for them to debate.
3. He has to work out a plan for a series of meetings (usually around ten) which, while encompassing a single large conception, can be divided into parts that are meaningful (and discussible) in themselves. He has to arrange these parts into a sequence which is not only *logically* but *psychologically* effective.
4. He must decide whether the readings for the series are to be specially prepared, or selected from existing materials, and how long and how difficult they should be.
5. He must decide whether or not to use audio-visual materials — films, recordings, slides, etc. — and, if so, what they should be and when they should be used.
6. Finally, he must decide what he should do about a guide for the discussion leader who will take charge of the course when it is made available for general use.

a. *Discussion Programs must be* DISCUSSIBLE

The most important single factor in the selection and treatment of topics for presentation in a program designed for adult group discussion is that they must be *discussible.* A discussible topic is one which lends itself to examination by argument and debate. It is one about which legitimate differences of opinion are not only possible but desirable. Above all it is a topic about which different value-judgments can be brought into play.

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*Should a program developer be a recognized subject-matter expert who works with the assistance of people who have had experience with the discussion approach to adult learning, or someone knowledgeable in the subject field but trained in discussion program building? This is a matter of opinion. The Project followed the former course. The American Foundation for Political Education (now the American Foundation for Continuing Education) has had success with the latter.

The physical phenomenon of aging, for example, does not in itself constitute a discussible subject, in the sense used here, among most adults (unless they happen to be geriatricians!). But the psychological effects of aging, individual attitudes toward it; the effect of increasing longevity of individuals on the society in which they live – these are topics that do lend themselves to adult discussion.

b. *Concepts and Issues*

A program is not brought into existence simply to promote discussion, i.e., argument for its own sake; the primary purpose is to help set up a situation in which people will have an opportunity to *increase their understanding* of a given topic and to *think critically* about it.

It is useful for a program developer to decide as early as possible whether, in approaching the topic, he will emphasize *concepts* or *issues.*

A program designed primarily to explore *concepts* is a program concerned chiefly with increasing the *understanding* of those who participate in it. Thus the discussion program WAYS OF MANKIND directs attention to a number of important cultural concepts – education, authority, ethics, status and role, etc. Its purpose is to help people become aware of these as meaningful conceptions. And while issues generally emerge as a result of the attention given the concepts, they are usually issues of *interpretation* (What does the term "education" mean in our culture?) and *value* (Is a society centered around individuals better than one centered around families?).

A study-discussion program based primarily on *issues* usually assumes some understanding of concepts. Thus, GREAT ISSUES IN AMERICAN POLITICS assumes a considerable acquaintance with American political ideas. The author felt free to identify certain large *issues* (centralization vs. decentralization; welfare state vs. rugged individualism) around which controversy has raged (or is raging) and to throw these issues into relief by providing excerpts from the writings or speeches of opposing figures in the controversies. He had to assume that most group participants could fill in, from their own stock of knowledge, the needed historical background.

To consider a variation, TRANSITION AND TENSION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA directs attention to an area of the world that is little known to most Americans. Some basic information about its history, geography, social and political systems had to be presented before there could be any meaningful discussion of issues facing us in relation to the people of this area. Thus, from necessity this had to be a *concept*-based discussion program. One has to become *aware* of the nature of the area and its problems before one can talk about it. What makes the program discussible is the fact that the information and opinions presented are always being considered by any group discussing it today in the light of the "cold war" – the conflict between the ideas of the "free world" and those of the communist-dominated countries, a context with which every intelligent American has some familiarity. The issues, therefore, are *implicit* in the materials and it is one of the objectives of group members to uncover them.

Preparation of a study-discussion program in the field of the humanities presents still another problem. Here it is difficult to "objectify" the issues since they are largely matters of taste and discrimination. Questions are directed, not at uncovering issues around which group participants may take positions, but at uncovering the concepts that need to be understood in order to illuminate the direct experience of the arts.

Whether, in developing a given discussion program, primary attention is directed to an exploration of *issues* or an examination of *concepts* depends in part on the subject-content of the program itself and in part on the presumed sophistication of the group participants.

Stress on *issues* is useful in promoting a debate in a group and developing skill in handling intellectual controversy. It encourages people to take positions and develop rational defenses for them – in other words, to think critically about their own and other people's ideas.

Emphasis on identification and discussion of *issues alone,* however, can result in a limited and often heated discussion, in which the exchange of ideas becomes a kind of intellectual ping-pong, with a few individuals deliberately taking fixed positions and defending them with all the skills of logic and persuasion at their command.

On the other hand, concentration on *concepts alone,* not making provision for uncovering the issues implicit in them, can degenerate into a wandering exchange of loosely related ideas.

Whatever its major emphasis, a good discussion program invites the thoughtful examination and review of challenging concepts *and* issues, with a view to increasing general understanding and improving individual capacity for critical thought.

c. *Planning for a Series*

In planning the sub-topics to be considered in the course of the series of a study-discussion program, the developer must always bear in mind that the individual sessions need to be viewed as *parts* of a total learning experience. Here the whole must somehow be greater than the sum of its parts. No single session should be considered as a discrete entity, complete in itself. One of the most powerful arguments advanced for the study-discussion program is that it provides the framework for *cumulative* learning experiences. It demands sustained attention to a given subject over a considerable period of time.

While each session within any given program series should be centered around a single major topic or idea, each of these should be so treated as to have a meaningful relationship to other topics or ideas in the series. Collectively they should be united to shed light on the major topic for the series as a whole. Thus, Elizabeth Drew, in her series on DISCOVERING MODERN POETRY, built her exploration of varieties of contemporary verse around a series of provocative themes: Frustration, Childhood and Loss of Innocence, Doubt and Struggle, etc. — all designed to touch one aspect or another of the human condition, and the various ways in which poets have sought to illumine it. But the purpose of the total program was to help participants get a better understanding of the nature of modern poetry.

In the series, THE POWER TO GOVERN, designed to broaden understanding of the concept of the separation of powers in our form of government, the developers had to clarify the functions of each of the three branches of government, to bring out the problems that their interaction with each other constantly precipitate, and to suggest alternative ways of controlling the governing power.

With the selection of the major topic for the series as a whole, and the determination of the various sub-topics to be used within the series, the program developer must decide how the series should open, and in what sequence, within the series itself, the sub-topics should be arranged.

The opening session of any series of a program has several purposes: It must introduce the subject under discussion; it must give those who attend some notion as to *how* the study-discussion method is supposed to work; and, finally, it must give the participants an opportunity to begin to get acquainted with each other and with the discussion leader.

In the first session for DISCOVERING MODERN POETRY, Elizabeth Drew deftly succeeds in introducing the topic and attracting attention to some of the ways in which modern poetry differs from the poetry of the past by comparing two poems on the same theme — one by a nineteenth century poet (Wordsworth) and one by a twentieth century poet (Auden). By contrasting the familiar with the unfamiliar, she brought participants immediately into direct contact with poetry and encouraged them to talk about it.

For the opening session of any series, the material should be brief (it cannot always be assumed that participants have been able to prepare for it), capable of being read or viewed or listened to at the meeting itself. It should also be provocative. The way in which the subject is presented at this first meeting "sets the stage" for the entire series.

The experience of the Experimental Discussion Project confirmed what every experienced group discussion leader has known for a long time: that in every *new* discussion group, participants have *to learn to learn together*. They are trying to determine just what the *subject* they have been brought together to discuss is all about, and they are trying also to find out something about *each other*.

For many people, the study-discussion group is a new kind of learning situation. Education for most adults is typified in the classroom situation: there is a teacher; there are students; the roles of each are clearly defined. But in the discussion group, the leader is a "first among equals"; he is a learner as well as leader; here the participants must expect not only to "get something out of it," but also to "put something into it." To this unfamiliar situation, most people take a little time to get adjusted. Abundant evidence from hundreds of groups points to the conclusion that it is not until after the third or fourth meeting that members of the average new group are able to put their whole attention on the topic under discussion.

All this has certain implications for study-discussion program development.

In the series, PARENTHOOD IN A FREE NATION, for example, the concepts of security and adequacy (basic to the understanding of later concepts in the series) are introduced in the opening session, *but care is taken to review them in later meetings* as the group explores their meaning in a variety of contexts. Key ideas of importance to understanding the central concept of a program should not be advanced early unless plans are made to repeat them in some form later on. In view of this phenomenon of "group growth," it is unrealistic to assume that in a ten-topic series, topics treated in the first third of the series will get as much thoughtful attention as those treated later on.

d. *Basic Readings*

The nature, kind and length of background readings for study-discussion programs should be decided in the light of the prospective readers. To illustrate, the readings of the original WAYS OF MANKIND program averaged 1500 words per session; when the program was revised, the new readings averaged 15,000 words per session. Both lengths were approved, although not by the same people or for the same reasons.

The prospective readers should also influence the choice between specially prepared readings versus readings selected from a variety of authors. In general, it would seem that where adults are good readers and have some grasp of the subject under consideration, they tend to favor substantial readings, selected from a variety of sources and reflecting various points of view ("built-in controversy"). Where the subject matter is not familiar, where the individual's reading skill is perhaps only average and where audio-visual materials can be used to supplement print, there is a tendency to favor shorter, specially prepared readings.

Maps, statistical tables, selected documents, should be included when appropriate. Selected lists of supplementary readings (books, pamphlets, periodical references) should be given. Although it is estimated that only about a fourth of the participants in the average group do any reading in addition to that assigned, this fourth should be encouraged to go more deeply into the subject. Reading references should be annotated, and in their selection care should be taken to assure (a) that the material is in print and fairly widely available; and (b) that it is designed for the general reader.

e. *Audio-Visual Aids*

The use of films, recordings, filmstrips, tapes, etc., in study-discussion programs enriches the "learning situation," when they are appropriate to the subject under consideration. These media – used with the group – provide the members with a shared experience, deepening their common focus on the topic under consideration. Furthermore, it is known that some people grasp ideas more readily when they are projected through sound or pictures, than through print alone.

As a general rule, audio-visual materials are probably of most use to the *average* discussion group in connection with the *early* programs in a series. By providing needed additional information and a common experience for group members, they assist in the process of group growth mentioned earlier. Later, as members become acquainted with each other and with the subject matter, more time may be devoted to discussion. For example, in the program, GREAT ISSUES IN AMERICAN POLITICS, only one motion picture was used – a dramatization of the Virginia Assembly's debate over the adoption of the Constitution – and at the first meeting. On the other hand, there is some evidence that if a series of films could be specially planned and produced *as integral parts of a coordinated course,* they might add a new dimension to the whole study-discussion experience.*

Use of recordings in connection with study-discussion programs has both advantages and disadvantages compared with films. They are cheaper to prepare and to distribute; record-playing equipment is widely accessible. On the other hand, they tend to have less appeal to the average individual than films; communication depends entirely upon the ear; unless the presentation is exceeedingly well done or is highly dramatic, members sitting in a group with nothing to do with their eyes tend to get bored and restless.

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*Analysis of evaluations given films used in both WORLD AFFAIRS and GREAT ISSUES showed that films used in the latter half of each series were generally given higher ratings than those shown earlier. Since the quality of films (made for purposes other than discussion) was about the same, this prompts the speculation that perhaps participants learned to select relevant material from the later films.

In the two successful record-based programs produced in the Project – WAYS OF MANKIND and JEFFERSON AND OUR TIMES – the quality of the material surmounted technical difficulties. Supplying group members with printed transcripts of the recordings helped sustain interest and seemed to increase the amount of information retained.

Where picture reproductions are required (as in the arts programs), slides have proved more useful than filmstrips. Although considerably more costly, they allow for a far more flexible arrangement of material within the program.

f. *Guides for Discussion Leaders*

How material for discussion leaders is prepared and where it is placed depend almost entirely on how the discussion program will be used. If the program is to be used primarily by groups in which the discussion leadership will be "rotated" or shared among members, the material should be simply written, and contain suggestions on the technique of discussion. Directions should be explicit, sample questions should be prepared, and the discussion-leader material should be bound into the pamphlet containing the general background readings for the program.

If the program is to be used primarily by groups led by trained or experienced leaders, the material in the guide should be brief, should relate chiefly to the content of the program, and should be bound separately.

Test Groups

No study discussion program should ever be released for general distribution without being tried out with some experimental discussion groups. These need not be diversified geographically. In testing the first two series, groups were set up in all parts of the country. Responses indicated that there were no significant differences in the various groups' general reactions. If a group in New York liked a program, the chances were high that it would be liked in California, Michigan, and Oklahoma.

Whatever the explanation, a group formed along the lines of the one described on p. 57 of this Report would constitute a good test group. As a check on possible differences in response, and to allow for differences in the leadership, three or four groups should be set up for each test.

Evaluation

In the early days of the Project we developed elaborate instruments of evaluation: forms to be filled out after every *session* by both leaders and participants, and additional forms for group organizers and staff observers. Experiences showed that, for our purposes, much of this was unnecessary.

We finally requested participants in test groups to fill out only three forms: one at the beginning, one in the middle, and one at the end of the series of programs. The first two were one-page questionnaires seeking reactions to the materials and to the course; the third, longer, sought over-all impressions. Open-ended questions were most useful.

Leaders were asked to keep a log of their experience in leading and to write a report of their experience at the conclusion of the series, with specific suggestions for changes in the materials.

Most valuable of all, of course, were staff members' observation of groups in action, supplemented by interviews with participants and leaders.

Summary

Over-all Planning

1. Centralize responsibility in an individual who thoroughly understands the subject and the group situation in which the program is to be used.
2. Plan for a minimum of ten two-hour sessions.
3. Build the program around discussible ideas. Decide whether the major emphasis in the series is to be around *issues* – where alternative intellectual positions must be understood, taken, and defended – or *concepts,* where ideas must be clearly grasped and exemplified in different points of view.
4. Determine the number of central ideas to be considered.
5. Develop a *sequence* of topics, designed to relate to each other the concepts or issues treated in individual sessions.
6. In arranging the *sequence* of topics in a series, attention should be given to the principle of group growth; *psychological* order is more important than *logical,* for learning through discussion.

Materials

Assuming equal quality and appropriateness, some *combination* of communications media (reading and films, or readings and recordings) is desirable. It provides a greater chance that *all* group members will have a background of information adequate for a good discussion.

Elementary and Advanced Programs

Where the primary purpose of a program is the development of increased understanding and appreciation of important ideas, concepts, issues, and where skill in reading and logical analysis on the part of participants cannot be assumed, specially *prepared* readings provide an effective framework for learning and discussion.

Where the primary purpose of the program is the acquisition of advanced substantive knowledge and increased skill in critical thinking, and where high skill in reading and logical analysis on the part of participants can be assumed, *selected* readings representing opposing positions and conflicting points of view provide an effective framework for learning and discussion.

Readings

Where the program is aimed at groups with moderate skill in reading and involves substantial use of audio-visual material, readings should usually be short (3,000 to 5,000 words per session) but substantial. For advanced groups, where the program is mainly or wholly built around print, readings may run from 15,000 to 20,000 words per session.

Films

Should be short (20 to 30 minutes), treat of people and the problems of people, or be graphic presentations of essential information. It is usually preferable to use them in the early programs of a discussion series.

Recordings

Should be brief (10 to 15 minutes), dramatic, and preferably accompanied by script which can be read as heard.

Leaders' Guides

Should contain some information about the fundamentals of discussion leadership; identify key concepts and issues to be given attention in each session; and, where appropriate, contain additional substantive material about the topic.

Test Groups

Should be small (15 to 18 participants), few in number (3 or 4), and accessible to regular observation by program developer. Membership of the test groups should be typical of the groups known to use discussion programs.

Evaluation

Should involve simple forms; "open-end" questions for participants; weekly "log" and end-of-series appraisal by discussion leaders; and observation of experimental groups in action, supplemented by interviews.

. . . a study group in action

The free play of ideas evokes an alternation of feelings in the group: from high good humor to quiet reflection, from the tension of argument to the relaxation of shared gaiety.

"Ideas" are people thinking; *and people* feel *about what they think. The interplay of feelings is as necessary to intellectual growth as is the interplay of the ideas themselves. A* group *gives fullest opportunity for both. (See inside covers, also.)*

Mr. Burch

Part Two

THE
NATURE
OF THE
PROBLEM

Chapter Six
THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

This part treats the various problems encountered by the Project in exploring ways and means of distributing and using study-discussion programs. It may not be unfair to compare the experimental discussion programs with plants developed in hothouses. They may do well under the protected conditions and the special nourishment that surround their development. But can they survive transplantation to normal outdoor gardens? The composts of adult education are filled with the moldering remains of programs of one kind or another that failed to make this transition.

Although the purpose of the test groups (described in the preceding part of this Report) was primarily to get some reaction to the idea of the coordinated study-discussion program and to evaluate the effectiveness of the materials in the group-learning situation, they also provided some important clues to the nature and dimension of the problems to be faced when we got around to working on plans for distribution and use of the programs after they had been tested and revised.

We realized that some agencies and organizations were probably more appropriate *local sponsors* of group study-discussion activities than others. This needed further investigation.

An examination of the background of the participants attracted to the test groups revealed the emergence of what seemed to be a clearly outlined "profile" of the *potential members* of study-discussion groups. Would this profile remain the same if the programs were taken out of the "experimental" category and made a "regular" adult education activity for which a fee was charged?

Many of the agencies and organizations cooperating with us in testing the experimental programs reported some difficulty in recruiting participants. Regular channels of publicity — bulletin board announcements, newspaper stories, notices to interested groups, etc. — frequently yielded poor returns. This suggested a need for new approaches to *promotion* as an integral part of any meaningful experiment in distribution.

On the basis of the responses of participants in the test groups, each of the several attempted patterns of *discussion leadership* were, *in some places and with some groups*, "successful." Would more objective evaluation of the employment of various patterns reveal that some were more *generally* appropriate and effective than were others?

Out of our observations of the work involved in setting up and maintaining the experimental study-discussion groups emerged the concept of the *"group organizer-manager."* This was an individual who took responsibility for group recruitment, arranged for the meeting place, the distribution of materials, etc. He also served as counselor to volunteer discussion leaders. In connection with the test groups this role was usually performed by some professional member of the staff of the sponsoring agency: a branch librarian, a director of adult education in the schools (or his assistant), a staff member from the university extension. There was nothing particularly new about this function in itself; what was perhaps new was a recognition of it as a role (distinct from that of the discussion leader) for which specific provision had to be made in any *expanding* program of study-discussion activities.

Finally, there was the stubborn matter of *cost*. The experimental groups had uncovered interest, even enthusiasm, on the part of a substantial number of adults in participation. But no fees were charged for participation in these groups. If involvement in the study-discussion program necessitated money changing hands, would this enthusiasm be appreciably dampened or even extinguished? Would, or could, the local sponsoring organizations go to the trouble and expense of doing this as a regular on-going activity? If they did, what would it cost them?

These were some of the questions which grew out of the group experimentation conducted in connection with the development of the study-discussion programs. They defined the nature of the problem to be attacked.

Preliminary Explorations

The Project made its initial attack on the problem of distribution at the end of its first year of existence. In the fall of 1952, when it had published its first two programs (GREAT MEN AND GREAT ISSUES and WORLD AFFAIRS ARE YOUR AFFAIRS), an arrangement was completed with the Film Council of America to conduct a limited experiment in the distribution of these two series of programs.

The Film Council of America was given this assignment because both of these programs involved a heavy use of films, and because it had a history of concern about the use of films in adult education.

Working with a variety of agencies and organizations, the F.C.A. staff procured a good deal of useful information about the problems involved in the distribution of materials and programs demanding the coordinated use of printed materials and films. In this particular experiment the participant's manuals were sold at print cost and the films supplied at a nominal rental rate.

Under this plan, the Film Council was able, in the two-year period 1952-54, to organize 705 discussion groups involving 12,690 participants in various parts of the country.

In this same period the Fund made a small grant to Stephens College, Missouri, to prepare and distribute a series of programs in the humanities, to be made available to discussion groups formed in various parts of the country among Stephens alumnae. The materials – which included recordings, pictures, and sculpture reproductions, as well as readings – were inexpensively reproduced and either rented or sold directly to participating alumnae groups.

To find out whether materials in the Project's study-discussion programs were of interest to, and suitable for, young people, the Fund made arrangements (1953-54) with the national headquarters of three youth organizations – The National Council of the Young Men's Christian Association, The National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association, the National 4-H Club Foundation – to distribute materials to be used experimentally in selected local units of these organizations. The results were encouraging, although reports indicated the need to modify the content of the materials to fit the backgrounds and interests of these young people.

The Test Center Project

The Fund's major experimentation in the distribution and use of study-discussion programs was concentrated in what came to be known as the Test Center Project. Initially this Project gave exclusive attention to the distribution of the 14 selected programs (noted on pp. 27-28) developed within the Experimental Discussion Project. As it advanced, other study-discussion program materials were introduced – notably those developed by the American Foundation for Political Education, the Foreign Policy Association, and the Great Books Foundation – and other kinds of liberal adult education activities were undertaken.

Although a full report on this Project will be given elsewhere,* a brief description of it here is warranted by the fact that a good portion of the information on which much of the remainder of this Report is based was drawn from studies and data that came directly or indirectly out of this Project.

The Test Center Project was set up in 1954 and came to an end in 1959. It ultimately involved the cooperation of 9 universities and colleges and one independent liberal arts center,** which were given financial assistance over a five-year period to enable them to undertake the promotion, organization, and management of groups using the various "packaged" programs.

The major purpose of the Project was to determine the extent to which, in a given college or university, a "center" devoted to the organization and management of adult liberal study-discussion programs could become self-supporting.

The program materials were sold to the cooperating Centers at a fixed price.*** Accounting procedures were set up to determine the annual cost of a Center's operation. Each Center had a full-time director, with secretarial assistance. Special funds were given for promotion, the training of leaders, and the collection of data concerning the participants.

The volunteer discussion leaders were given special training.

Meetings were held in many kinds of places – classrooms, community center halls, church social rooms, board meeting rooms of local business and industry. As the number increased, more and more groups met in private homes. This inspired more than one Center to use the phrase "living room learning" to describe the study-discussion group experience.****

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*In "A History of The Fund for Adult Education" to be published in 1961.

**University of Arkansas, Division of General Extension; University of California, University Extension; Pasadena (Calif.) Area Liberal Arts Center; Whittier College, Liberal Arts Center; University of Louisville, University College; Macalester College, Twin Cities Liberal Arts Center for Adults; University of Kansas City, Evening Division; University of Akron, Evening and Adult Education Division; University of Virginia, Extension Division; University of Utah, Extension Division.

***The Fund paid all *development* costs of the programs; the distribution price was thus based on only the cost of *reproduction*, which in most cases was held to $2.25 per *participant* set, sometimes with additional costs for *group* properties such as records or slides.

****See Appendix D for a description of one university's experience with "living room learning."

Centers were requested to charge fees of not less than $10 per individual, and $18 per couple.

While the Test Center Project was in operation the Fund also enabled a limited amount of special experimentation in program distribution and use to go on in interested schools and libraries outside the Test Center Project areas. Thus, in Santa Barbara (Calif.), Snyder (N. Y.), and East Orange (N. J.), discussion groups were set up through public school adult programs; and in Detroit, New York City, and a few other places, groups were established under Public Library auspices.

Information obtained from these various study-discussion group "operations," supplementing that secured in the early experience with the "test groups," will be presented in the next six chapters. It will be organized around the following main headings: (1) Local Sponsorship; (2) Identifying and Recruiting Participants; (3) Organization and Management; (4) Discussion Leadership; and (5) Costs and Financing.

Chapter Seven

LOCAL SPONSORSHIP

Introduction into any given community of any substantial number of study-discussion programs requires a local institutional sponsor of some kind. This sponsor must take responsibility for promoting, managing, servicing, financing, and recruiting and training leadership for the groups formed around the programs.

Three types of educational institutions, found in nearly every community of any size, come immediately to mind: public schools, public libraries, and universities and colleges.

Each of these three institutions has much to offer as a sponsoring agency for adult study-discussion programs.

Each is soundly established; able to offer activities to interested adults; firmly identified with education.

A tradition of concern for *liberal* adult education is inactive in most public school adult programs.*

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*Of course, one can immediately think of exceptions—Shorewood, Wisconsin; San Jose, California; East Orange—Maplewood, New Jersey; Snyder, New York, to name only four.

Libraries offer a great potential as study-discussion group sponsors. Many of the larger libraries already sponsor several groups each year. Many are identified with the increasingly successful Great Books discussion groups. But one of the criteria which the Experimental Discussion Project set for the selection of sponsoring institutions was that they should seem *able to expand their programs* of study-discussion activity. Most public libraries offering study-discussion programs are not now able to put on more than one or two groups.* To organize any sizable number of groups would cost money, and libraries, traditionally not affluent, have never been either able or willing to appropriate much money for this kind of activity. Furthermore, they have a policy of not charging fees for group participation. This cuts off income from participants.

Universities and Colleges

Universities and colleges view responsibilities toward adult education in two lights, somewhat different one from the other.

Universities, particularly state universities, have carried on extension activities for more than half a century. This has involved provision of academic credit courses as well as non-credit vocational, avocational, and general education subjects for adults of all ages. In recent years nearly all of the universities maintaining extension divisions, and those in urban centers operating evening colleges, have been giving increased attention to the liberal arts and sciences. This is partly a reflection of the renewed emphasis on the subjects in the "regular" university courses. Part of it may also be attributed to the work of the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults set up in 1951 by a committee of the Association of University Evening Colleges.**

Liberal arts colleges, as distinct from universities, have not, on the whole, been very active in adult education.***

Most liberal arts colleges are small and located in middle-sized communities, without great resources. Most have been for years in a chronic fiscal crisis. Their immediate adult "clientele" can be regarded as either adult members of the geographical community in which the college exists, or its alumni. Thus, while some of the colleges are trying to provide some form of continuing education activities for their alumni and some offer programs open to members of the community, these efforts, like those of the public school administrators mentioned above, are usually more public relations gestures than serious educational ventures.

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*Much of the success of the Great Books discussion group program is attributable to the generous and loyal support of many, many public libraries—large and small—that have been willing to sponsor one or two groups. With the help of the Great Books Foundation—in promotion and leader training—it is conceivable that many libraries will be able to increase the number of Great Books discussion programs offered.

**Early in the Center's existence it produced several series of adult discussion courses on a variety of subjects for experimental use by instructors in university evening colleges. (These courses were on literature, science, group dynamics, and dramatics.)

The Center has also been active in sponsoring other investigations in the use of discussion among selected universities and colleges.

***James Crimi, in a survey made in 1953, found 233 colleges reporting some kind of adult education program. Crimi, James, "Adult Education in the Liberal Arts Colleges," *Notes and Essays on Education for Adults*, No. 17. Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1957.

Recently some colleges – notably Pomona in California and Southwestern at Memphis – have been experimenting with executive development programs of one kind or another. Many of these have concentrated attention on the liberal arts and employed study-discussion methods. They have increasingly attracted the attention of local business and industry, and may be the advance guard for more broadly inclusive programs of continuing liberal education to be put on under the joint sponsorship of institutions of higher learning and industry.*

It is obvious, therefore, despite a somewhat spotty record of activity and interest in continuing liberal education on the part of universities and colleges, that they are – potentially at any rate – highly appropriate institutions to serve as sponsors for study-discussion group activity.

A review of the "profile" (See p. 57) of the average study-discussion group that emerged from the Fund's experimentation with "test groups" revealed that a majority of the participants were either college graduates or had some college experience. It may be assumed, therefore, that, generally speaking, those taking part in such groups would feel more at home with university or college sponsorship of the programs. Therefore, when the Fund decided to make an intensive exploration of the problems involved in getting wide-scale distribution and use of the programs (the Test Center Project described on p. 49), it decided that universities and colleges were the most favorable institutions through which to channel the experiment.

Since the experience of these selected universities and colleges provided so much of the material for the discussion of the problems and possibilities connected with the distribution and use of the programs, let us take time to look quickly at three of them.

The University of California, Los Angeles

Located in one of the largest and fastest-growing urban areas in the United States, the University of California, Los Angeles, maintains one of the largest extension services of any university in the country. Its service area includes all of the state south of the Tehachapi range of mountains.

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*For further information see *New Directions in Liberal Education for Executives*, by Peter E. Siegle, published by the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults; and *Toward the Liberally Educated Executive*, edited by Robert A. Goldwin and Charles A. Nelson, published by The Fund for Adult Education.

The Extension Division's administrative officers warmly supported the new venture. In the university there was a climate sympathetic to the liberal arts and favorable to experimentation. The Extension Division had already had some experience with discussion groups under lay leadership prior to the Test Center experiment. In 1953 it had successfully sponsored and directed adult discussion groups in world politics, in cooperation with the American Foundation for Political Education.

Operating with one full-time director (a young man who possessed both a good liberal education and extensive experience with the group-discussion method) and some part-time assistance, the Test Center Project set up 17 groups in the fall of 1955. The following spring the number was 25. In the fall of 1958, now with a staff of five full-time professionals, the project enrolled 110 groups with approximately 2100 participants.

Whittier College

Located in a small Southern California community of the same name (pop. 31,376) not far from Los Angeles, Whittier College is the most important single cultural influence in that area. Up to 1954, however, the College had sponsored few adult education activities of any consequence. The College enjoyed a solid tradition of liberal education, and the administration strongly supported the innovation of the study-discussion project.

The College was both astute and fortunate in its choice of a director for the new center, a young woman who possessed just about all of the desirable characteristics a personnel director trying to write a set of specifications for this job could dream up. Attractive, intelligent, energetic, enthusiastic, she was a university-grade scholar, interested in people, a good organizer, an eloquent speaker, and devoted to her assignment.

Two carefully selected study-discussion groups were formed as "pilot ventures" in the fall of 1954, and led by the Center director. Out of this group, volunteers were selected for leadership training. The Center's activities expanded each year. In the fall of 1957, the Center enrolled 476 adults in 27 groups, in Whittier and nine adjacent communities.*

The University of Utah

The experiment in the distribution and use of study-discussion programs through the University of Utah Extension Division is unique in several ways because of the community in which it operates.

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*The Whittier Center achieved 40 per cent support of the costs of its activities from participants' fees in 1958. The administration of the college, nevertheless, decided against paying or raising the additional funds required for its continued operation.

See Appendix C for Dr. Betty Unterberger's account of how the Center got started, and case histories of its effect on participants.

In the Salt Lake City area, the dominant religion is Mormonism. This presents both an opportunity and a problem to the University in its efforts to get wide use of the study-discussion programs. It is an opportunity, because the church strongly endorses education and is itself organized around a concept of lay leadership. It is a problem for the same reasons. The church has its own educational program, which is life-long, and which relies on volunteer lay leaders. This means that often the most responsive members in a community are completely involved in church activities. Furthermore, the people of Utah have a tradition which encourages citizens to contribute their services to the church or community. Therefore, the energies of both the community leaders and of the members of the university faculty are expected to be spent freely.

In this situation the University Extension Division decided to make study-discussion programs available under three different patterns of discussion leadership. In the first, materials are sold to groups; the groups supply their own leadership, usually from within their membership. In the second, the University supplies a trained discussion leader at a modest fixed fee, plus cost of materials. In the third, the University, at a higher fee, supplies a qualified subject-matter specialist to conduct the course on a lecture-discussion basis.

In the fall of 1958, the Division was sponsoring 72 study-discussion groups, more than half of them led by members of the groups.

Some Tentative Conclusions About Sponsorship

The experience of the Test Centers justified the decision of the Fund to promote these programs through universities and colleges. It demonstrated that colleges and universities are appropriate sponsoring agencies *when* the administration of the institution is sympathetic to this kind of activity and willing to provide both moral and financial support. They are appropriate *when* the administration of the extension division or the evening college division accepts it as a desirable educational activity and supplies it with qualified personnel.

What the experience of the Centers indicates is that, given support by the administration of the college or university, and able direction by the administrator of the study-discussion activity, there is good response in the community.

On the other hand, the experience of other institutions — schools, libraries and independent agencies using one or two programs *as part of their regular program of offerings* — indicates that sponsorship through institutions of higher learning is not the *only* way, and in many communities not even the best way, of making this kind of a learning experience accessible to many people.

Chapter Eight

IDENTIFYING AND RECRUITING PARTICIPANTS

Available evidence indicates that the various study-discussion programs attract the same kinds of people, despite the fact that the programs differ in content, and to a certain extent in methodology. Therefore, the data on group participants assembled from the several Test Centers described in the previous chapter may have implications beyond their relevance for this particular project.

Analysis and interpretation of data collected from these centers in the year 1956-57 by Irving Lorge revealed that more than 50 per cent of the registrants in groups were under 40 years of age, with about 5 per cent 60 or over. This led him to conclude that the programs are most attractive to the young and the younger middle-aged adult.

Women in general outnumbered the men as participants by a ratio of six to four.

More than half of the participants (54 per cent) were college graduates, and many held advanced degrees. Only 13 per cent had had four years of high school or less.

Forty-two per cent had lived in their respective communities for nine years or more. Only 20 per cent had lived there two years or less.

About half of the participants in the group had never participated in this type of program before.

Most of the participants were in the upper socio-economic range in their communities; 46 per cent were self-employed business people, teachers, executives, professionals and semi-professionals. Sales and clerical work were also strongly represented. Forty-five per cent were housewives.

The general profile is remarkably similar to that revealed by studies of several other liberal-arts adult group-study populations. Most recently, this has been shown in three independent research studies financed, and now published, by The Fund for Adult Education.* Almost without variation, the participants are shown to be well educated, active in community affairs, of professional or managerial occupation for the most part, and at or above the middle income levels; they are well established in their communities; they read at a level above the average, see fewer movies and watch less television than the average; they very frequently enroll in liberal discussion groups *as couples* and with friends; and they show high correlations among social activity, group discussion activity, and persistence in attendance in these programs. For present purposes of comparison, Abbott Kaplan's report on the UCLA Liberal Arts group-study programs will be cited.

Profile of a Discussion Group

One might summarize the data from the two reports by saying that in the average discussion group the women will outnumber the men, and a majority of both will be between 35 and 45 years of age. They will be well educated – most of them having at least some college education. They will be fairly well off; few with family incomes of less than $5,000. A very high percentage of them will be classified under that ambiguous heading "housewife"; the rest will be professional people, self-employed business men, executives of one kind or another, and members of the growing white collar class.

Most of them will be established residents of the community in which they live.

They will be good readers. They try to keep up with events, regularly look at *Time* or *Newsweek* or one or more of the opinion magazines, *Harper's, Atlantic, Reporter* or *The New Yorker*. They will be moderate TV and movie viewers, seeking the more serious programs.

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*STUDIES IN ADULT GROUP LEARNING IN THE LIBERAL ARTS:

1. Kaplan, Abbott: *Study-Discussion in the Liberal Arts*
2. Davis, James A., and Associates: *A Study of Participants in the Great Books Program*
3. Hill, Richard J.: *A Comparative Study of Lecture and Discussion Methods*

White Plains: The Fund for Adult Education, 1960 (boxed).

They are apt to be busy people – contrary to the general impression – occupying their time with a diverse array of activities; concerned with, but not completely absorbed in, community and organizational activities.

For about half of them participation in a study-discussion group will be a brand new experience.

Perhaps the major characteristic of these participants is that they are interested in the world around them, in other people and in ideas – other people's ideas as well as their own.

Why Do They Join Study-Discussion Groups?

In the Lorge analysis, a majority of the participants were motivated to join a study-discussion group primarily for the purpose of "free exchange of ideas." That this may be somewhat misleading is indicated by the results of the more intensive Southern California study, in which selected participants were asked to give their reasons for enrolling in the discussion program.

A large percentage of participants, almost half in each case, were motivated by interest in the subject matter or in self-enrichment and intellectual stimulus, while a lesser percentage (38.7 per cent) were attracted by the discussion aspect of the program. Less than five per cent gave "exchange of views and discussion" alone as the primary reason for enrolling.

When it comes down to something as intimate and involved as the reason why an individual chooses to enroll in a discussion program – or any other program for that matter – statistical representations, in and of themselves, may be relatively meaningless. One of the most valuable and interesting parts of the Southern California study* is contained in the series of selected case histories of some of the participants included in the report.

Here, in the participants' own words, are some of the reasons given for joining a group:

"I don't expect to contribute anything," remarked the young wife of a social scientist in answer to the question of why she enrolled in a group. "I expect to learn something about international affairs and world politics. I feel I've been in a rut. The children occupy me so much. All I know about international affairs is what I get from *Newsweek*. I feel as though I haven't been keeping up with things. I'm not exactly sure what I expect to get from the discussion group, but I'd like some mental stimulus, a chance to learn something about international problems."

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*Kaplan, Abbott, cited above.

"My husband showed interest in the WAYS OF MANKIND program," wrote the wife of the president of an engineering firm, "so I called up and we went. I didn't go because of interest in anthropology, but I've always enjoyed discussions, and yet would not have gone if my husband had not been interested in going to this evening group . . ."

As we have already noted, over half of the members of most discussion groups join with husband or wife. Usually the husband comes initially because the wife is interested. But who drags whom to the first meeting is not important here. This may be evidence of a growing concern among many married couples over lack of commonly shared intellectual interests, and their discovery of the informal study-discussion group as a means of doing something about it.

In most communities today there is little opportunity for many individuals with intellectual interests, and a concern over social problems, to engage in thoughtful sustained discussion about them, or to meet other people who share these interests. Such people don't want to go back to school, or listen to lectures. They seem to look upon the study-discussion groups as stimulants to more intensive reading in areas of their interest, and as providing them an opportunity to check on the quality of their own thinking.

"Just wanted to learn something about the subject."

This laconic remark from a middle-aged, self-employed businessman typifies one of the most commonly given answers to the question: Why did you enroll? In the jargon of our day, most of the people who sign up for study-discussion groups are "content oriented." They want to get more knowledge about something.

What subjects are they most interested in? A glance at the sales figures from The Fund for Adult Education for participant's materials for the various programs over the past seven years, compiled in February 1959, provides some index to the varying degrees of interest aroused in the different programs.*

World Affairs Are Your Affairs (1952) (Rev. 1954)	15,500
Ways of Mankind (1954) (Rev. 1957)	14,972
Parenthood in a Free Nation (1954)	11,742
Great Men and Great Issues (1952)	10,000
Introduction to the Humanities (1954) (Rev. 1958)	8,217
Looking at Modern Painting (1957)	7,797
Economic Reasoning (1955)	4,630
Jefferson and Our Times (1954)	4,445

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*It should be noted, however, that these figures are somewhat misleading for this purpose. Some programs have been out longer than others, and some—notably WORLD AFFAIRS and WAYS OF MANKIND—were given more publicity.

Aging in the Modern World (1957)	4,118
Discovering Modern Poetry (1956)	3,044
Leading Group Discussion (1956)	2,788
You and Your Community (1954)	2,175
Great Issues in American Politics (1956)	1,791
The Power to Govern (1957)	1,226
Transition and Tension in Southeast Asia (1957)	1,225
Ways to Justice (1954)	1,206

In his summary of reports from the various experimental centers, Lorge notes that for the year 1956-57, the three most popular programs were INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANITIES, which accounted for 23 per cent of all groups formed that year; WAYS OF MANKIND, which embraced 19 per cent, and GREAT ISSUES IN AMERICAN POLITICS, which drew the attention of 12 per cent.

"I took this one (on international relations) during the McCarthy period," reported the middle-aged wife of an engineer. "It provided an opportunity to give vent to one's feelings. I was curious to see how people could let something like McCarthyism happen. I believe in the democratic process and discussion groups are at the heart of it."*

This is not exactly the attitude that the zealous advocate of study-discussion groups as a vehicle of learning hopes participants will have when they join the groups. And yet there is no doubt that a number of people joined groups in the McCarthy period for just this reason.

"I didn't really know what to expect," said a registered nurse, wife of a physician, when she joined a WAYS OF MANKIND group. "I guess I was just interested in hearing other people's ideas . . . hearing different points of view."

Loneliness for many people in our culture is not simply a lack of being able to meet and talk with other people. As the director of the Southern California study remarked *à propos* a comment that people joined discussion groups to meet other people: "It should be realized . . . that it is not just to meet people, any people, but to meet people with the kinds of interests represented in the Liberal Arts Programs." For many it is just as important to be in a situation in which they can hear good talk about ideas, to get fresh points of view on familiar subjects, as it is to be able themselves to "say what they think."

A young woman research assistant for an employer association joined a group because she wanted "stimulation, felt the need to think."

In a world which grows increasingly complex, in which there is more and more to be known and apparently less and less time in which to know

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*Kaplan, Abbott: *Study-Discussion in the Liberal Arts.*

it, some people seem to want to get themselves into situations that will force reflection, encourage them to *think* about the subjects which interest them or which they know are important; that will place a premium on excellence in thinking.* This kind of expectation places great demand on the informal study-discussion situation – and particularly on the quality of the discussion leadership. We will give more attention to this problem in Chapter Ten.

It is difficult to evaluate accurately the motivations and expectations that impel people to register in study-discussion programs. In most instances this is heavily influenced by the enrollees' experiences in formal educational situations. In the Southern California study it was noted that those with a college education were less demanding of the group leadership than those with less education; on the other hand, the former took a more critical attitude toward their fellow group members than the latter. This may be attributed to the fact that those with, say, only a high school education were closer to the classroom stereotype of the leader-as-teacher-as-authority than the college people, most of whom had been exposed to the more mature environment of the seminar. Furthermore, they obviously felt the need for more attention to the acquisition of information.

One is struck, in going over the educational backgrounds of many group participants, by the number of the male participants in groups who are products of business, technical, and scientific education. While some are in the groups, as we have already indicated, at the urging of their wives, a number expressed genuine concern over the narrowness of their training. In part, this may reflect the attention currently being given liberal education in the major business and technical journals, as well as the publicity that has attended some of the more spectacular executive training courses in the liberal arts, such as those sponsored by the Bell Telephone Company and other concerns.

One engineer stated:**

"I had little chance in my engineering training to get any contact with the humanities, although they did try to cram a little down our throats. I liked it, but never had the time to look into the matter further. This (study-discussion program) seemed like a good introduction to the humanities and offered a good chance to see if I was interested in going into the matter further . . ."

Another said:

"I enrolled because I felt my education at M.I.T. had been completely warped. I wanted to become a more well-rounded person. I thought the discussion group would provide a means of self-expression in areas where I don't usually have a chance to do anything. It was a chance to get outside the ordinary line of chatter you get with friends. Furthermore, it's stimulating to broaden one's thinking by discussion rather than just in the form of reading."

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*This came out clearly in the response of selected citizen leaders to participation in the Community Leadership Development Institutes which the Fund sponsored in 1953 and 1954 at Bigwin Inn, Ontario Province, Canada, and the later Discussion Leadership Institutes held for Test Center directors and university officials at Estes Park, Colorado, in 1956 and 1957. These residential institutes were liberal adult education learning experiences as well as leader training.

**This quotation and those that follow are from the Southern California study.

These are representative statements. They do not, of course, cover completely the wide range of motives advanced. "My husband has had considerably more education than I, and I wanted to sort of keep up with him and not get bogged down in domesticity" . . . "My husband and I are getting along in years and hope this program will give us some new interests we may follow up when he retires." Such answers as these suggest related reasons for taking part.

What They Got Out of the Experience

There are really only two ways of approaching the task of trying to find out what people get out of an experience of any kind. You can ask them. And you can observe what they do and say after the experience is over. Any judgments, conclusions, generalizations, have to be advanced cautiously.

Every study-discussion group is unique. Of the three major elements in it – the materials and general plan of the program used; the discussion leaders and type of leadership technique employed; and the adult participants – only the materials, and in this instance the general plan of the program, can be said to constitute a constant in more than one situation. And of course these differed from program subject to program subject. The other two elements were always variable.

Yet some attempt at appraisal is necessary, if only because attempts at evaluation, on the part both of participants in an educational endeavor and of those who are responsible for the enterprise itself, are essential to the educational process itself.

In preparing this summary on what people get out of participation in study-discussion groups we have relied chiefly on subjective responses of thousands of individual participants – oral and written – supplemented by reports of competent observers.

A study-discussion program, by its very nature, has at least two built-in *assumed* purposes. It is assumed that those who enroll in a group (a) want to learn something more about the subject under consideration, and (b) want to exchange ideas and information with other people about it.

Given these assumptions, we may then ask:

Do people who enroll in these groups *really* increase their knowledge and information?

Do they get a chance to exchange ideas and information? Do they find it valuable after they've gotten it?

In the section just preceding this, we reviewed some of the expectations and motivations listed by various people as to what they hoped to get out of the experience. Were these expectations realized?

Do people get anything out of participation in these groups which they find rewarding but *hadn't* expected?

Finally, as a kind of summary to this section of the Report, we will try to indicate the *most probable outcomes,* for the average individual, of participation in a study-discussion group.

Knowledge and Information

A little over a fourth of the participants interviewed in the Southern California study thought they gained a *great deal* of knowledge in the subject from the experience; about two-thirds thought they had *some* increase. The Lorge report on the reactions of all the participants in the experimental centers indicated that little more than half found participation in the programs a "profitable learning experience" — although the range was great (from 27 per cent in one center to 77 per cent in another).

The Southern California interviewers, in a composite summary of their own judgments as to what participants had gotten out of the experience, were unanimous in placing "knowledge and information" at the top of the list.

On the other hand, only 13.3 per cent of the participants interviewed in that study thought they had gotten any new concepts or attitudes out of the experience and nearly a fourth felt they hadn't learned anything that was useful elsewhere.

There was some indication, as we have already noted, that individuals with considerable education usually reported little acquisition of either knowledge or information; the less education the individual participant had, the more highly he rated these things. This could reflect — as it did in some instances — on the inadequacy of the study materials themselves for more sophisticated people. It could reflect dissatisfaction with a particular discussion group as a *learning* situation. But it could also mean that the better educated person is loath to admit, in this situation, that he has learned anything, or it could mean simply that he comes to discussion groups not to increase his "knowledge and information," but to test what he already has with other people, and to find out what other people think about the subject.

Exchange of Ideas and Information

The most frequently recurring answer filled in by group participants to the question, "What did you get out of this meeting?", was, "Exchange of ideas and information."

The first thing that immediately confronts anyone trying to appraise this response is that this phrase is highly ambiguous. It describes an activity; it does not describe a product. Its widespread use by people trying to tell what participation in a discussion group means to them has probably helped confirm in the minds of many people the suspicion that adults get into discussion groups because they like talk for the sake of talk.

Group discussion leaders, asked in the Southern California study to respond to the question, "What did you get out of the discussion groups?" listed "learned to discuss effectively," "to handle controversial issues objectively and dispassionately," "to listen and not to monopolize the discussion," as the top reasons; closely followed by "gained information," "developed greater insight into issues and awareness of complexities."

Asked, "What in general do you think that participants got out of the discussion group?" they listed the following: "Learned to listen and to respect the views of others as well as to discuss," "gained information, increased knowledge of the subject matter," "developed new insights and interests," "learned to re-evaluate and modify their views."

Lorge, in the analysis of participant responses to the question, "What did you find the most appealing aspect of your participation in the program?" found that about half thought it was "free exchange of ideas." And in answer to the question, "What did you find the least appealing?" he found that a third said "the development of discussion skills."

The California interviewers listed the following as their own assessment of the most valuable outcomes for individual participants:

increased knowledge of subject matter
acquisition of tolerance for other points of view
broadened outlook
more serious reading
intellectual awakening
new tastes and interests.

In this same study, participants were asked if they thought they became more open-minded as a result of the experience. A majority said "yes," but a quarter of them stated firmly that they considered themselves open-minded to start with!

Study-Discussion Group Serendipities

In reflecting on their experience in the groups, many participants found that while sometimes they didn't get what they thought they came for, they took away something they found even more valuable: a greater awareness of their own capacities and shortcomings; respect and understanding for opposing positions and points of view; new friendships with people who shared intellectual interests; increased thoughtfulness and selectivity in reading.

There is a dilemma facing almost every study-discussion group, implicit in the very term "study-discussion." Some of the members anticipate heavy concentration on subject matter, want to stick closely to the "text" and thus maximize the acquisition of information. Others want to concentrate on a free exchange of views, and place secondary emphasis on information as such. A successful discussion is one in which there is an early accommodation to this situation by those who bring to discussion these two different expectations.

One of the important outcomes of the well-handled study-discussion group experience for some individuals, therefore, is that they should get over their preoccupation with one of these aspects of learning to the exclusion of the other, and learn to give attention to both.

Summary: *What the average individual will probably get out of participation in a study-discussion group.*

Analyzing the views of participants, leaders, and observers of discussion groups, we come up with this conception of what the average intelligent individual will get out of a well-run study-discussion group.

1. A greater awareness of his own knowledge – and lack of knowledge – of the subject under consideration.
2. If he works at it, some increase in the capacity to articulate it effectively.
3. A better understanding of how other people think about the subject, and an awareness of the fact that it is possible to respect people who have views that differ radically from his own.[*]
4. Some increase in information and knowledge. Just how much will of course depend on a number of things: extent of interest in *getting* information about the subject; absence of much previous information, etc. (It should be noted that if the acquisition of information is the participant's chief or exclusive aim, there are probably more efficient ways of going about it than joining a discussion group.)
5. An increase in motivation to learn, and to acquire the habit of critical thinking.[**] (Expectations on this point will be more realistic

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[*] One of the Southern California interviewers wrote cogently on this point. "In my judgment this . . . is as important as the changing of views and it is a far more likely end product . . . it reduces the tendency to see one's political opponents as unreasonable dogmatists or sniveling idiots, ill-equipped to understand the political issues of our time. Without this recognition that men may be reasonable and still differ I don't suppose the two-party system or popularly responsible government itself can work."

[**] Some support for this view is contained in an unpublished thesis by Alton Parker Hadlock, *A study of the development of critical thinking through adult discussion groups*: A dissertation. Los Angeles: University of California, 1958.

if it is remembered that a single study-discussion program lasts only from 10 to 12 weeks, during which time members meet together for a total of only 20 to 24 hours – with about the same amount of time in preparation.)

6. Some new friendships with people who share their intellectual interests.
7. An increased awareness of events and of readings related to the subject of discussion, which reflects itself in greater attention to newspaper articles, books, and periodicals on the subject.
8. Frequently, an increased interest in "community affairs."

These, it seems to us, are all in the nature of reasonable expectations, in what might be called the "average discussion group situation."

The trouble with such generalizations, of course, is that there is no such thing as an "average" study-discussion group. Like the individuals who participate in them, each one is a bundle of potentialities. Nobody can really predict what is going to happen in a discussion group, and no one can predict what will happen to an individual who enrolls in one – least of all the individual himself. While it is possible greatly to exaggerate the roles played by the discussion-group experience in some authenticated cases of dramatic change, there is no question that the experience has many times been a precipitating factor.

Recruiting Study-Discussion Group Participants

We have seen in Chapter Seven that the programs developed within this Project were not for everyone. They have an appeal chiefly for people with a certain background, a certain set of interests. These are a relatively small but significant segment of the community. How does one get their attention?

When the Fund made its agreements with the various universities and colleges undertaking to cooperate in the "Test Center" experiment, it recognized that few of them knew any more about the promotion of these programs than it did. It was soon discovered that the "regular" promotion methods – news stories, spot announcements on the radio, bulletin board notices, talks to clubs, churches, social groups; use of the institution's regular channels of publicity – didn't work out very well. These helped create what might be called a "climate" of interest in the programs, but brought few, if any, bodies into the groups.

The Fund therefore engaged the services of a New York agency that specialized in assisting in the promotion of educational ventures. Two suggestions emerged which were widely adopted: one, that a special brochure – colorful, attractive, informative – be prepared announcing all the study-discussion programs; this to be sent to the most likely "prospects" in the area. Lists were obtained of names of people who subscribed to some of the magazines of opinion *(Harper's, The Reporter, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists)* and also of people who were members of organizations engaging in serious discussion of important topics (League of Women Voters, alumni associations, etc.).

Secondly, the agency recommended that to get the best results the mailing pieces should be accompanied by a letter designed to point up the relationship of the programs to the general interests and concerns of the person to whom it was mailed, and that a reply card, or an enrollment form, should be enclosed with the letter and brochure.

In tests of variations of this procedure it was found that more replies were received when those written to were simply invited to *indicate* an interest in the programs, rather than to enroll in a group. People who had definitely indicated an interest could then be approached by personal visits or telephone.

Talks *about* the program to community groups do not as a rule prove very helpful in persuading people to participate. To get around this, some of the experimental centers developed "demonstration teams" to visit groups and put on skits of one kind or another which communicated some of the excitement and enjoyment present in a study-discussion group. These were found to be of interest to many organizations, and sometimes constituted welcome program material for their "regular" meetings.

But with all these devices, it is both astonishing and reassuring to discover, via Dr. Lorge's analysis, that when asked, "How did you find out about this program?" some 46 per cent reported that they discovered it through friends. This suggests that those who took part were the programs' best advertisers, talking about them and even inducing their friends to join.

Chapter Nine

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The promotion, organization and maintenance of study-discussion groups require two kinds of leadership.

First, leadership is needed to get the people to come and stay together for the purpose of study-discussion.

Study-discussion groups do not, like Minerva, spring "full-panoplied from the brow of Jove." Somebody has to locate the group members, persuade them to join, get literature to them, arrange for meeting rooms and for equipment of one kind or another, send out notices. Somebody has to find discussion leaders and train them or see that they are trained.

Second, leadership is needed in the discussions.

In this chapter we treat the functions and activities of the professional and semi-professional people who direct, organize and manage study-discussion programs. We will deal with the discussion leaders in the next chapter.

Organization and Management of Groups

This chapter applies to institutional situations in which a large number of groups are being organized. The information is based on the reports received from the Test Centers.

The functions of the promotion, organization, and management of discussion groups may be performed by one person. In describing how groups were established to test the experimental programs, we noted that the administrative officer in the sponsoring agency assumed these functions, either directly or indirectly. He did so in addition to all his other work. We noted that in the public library, it was a branch librarian who was the "organizer-manager," publicizing the program, selecting the leaders, recruiting groups members, etc. In the public school adult program it was the director. In the youth group agency it was the program director or director of public affairs education.

The point is that where study-discussion groups using these programs are organized as *an incidental part of a larger on-going program of adult education,* the organizing-managing functions can frequently be absorbed in the functions of the staff member. Then the groups are few and are intended to remain few. But where an agency undertakes to organize an ever-increasing number of study-discussion groups, where the establishment and maintenance of such groups becomes a *program* in its own right, someone has to work at it *full time.* The experimental liberal adult education centers were of this kind. They had full-time directors.

Though there were differences in how the centers were set up, the *functions* of "organization and management" were the same in all the centers.

Two kinds of professional and semi-professional people were employed in these centers: the administrator of the program (usually called the *director*) and part-time or full-time assistants (usually called *coordinators*).

The Director

The choice of director is critical. He or she comes to personify the program itself. Therefore, some of the desired consequences of liberal adult education should be typified in his person. He should be liberally educated. He should have a warm interest in people and want them actively engaged in their intellectual improvement. He should be able to organize; to speak and write effectively; to persuade and direct other people; to take and to delegate responsibility. He should be thoroughly familiar with the discussion method of learning and with the materials of the programs. He should also be, in Robert Redfield's wonderful phrase, "at work on his own enlargement." Through reading, and discussion with others, he should be engaged in *his own* continuing education.

In a center located in a university or college, the director also has the sometimes delicate job of explaining the nature and purpose of the informal study-discussion program to faculty members. (In most of the institutions sponsoring programs, it was necessary to have the approval of members of faculty committees before the materials were used.)

The director has to prepare, or supervise the preparation of, the promotional material; give promotional talks; advise potential participants about the groups in which they should enroll; select and train volunteer discussion leaders; arrange for meeting places and for audio-visual material and equipment; attend organization meetings of new groups; collect fees; prepare budgets and reports, etc. If the operation is fairly large he may delegate some of these jobs to assistants.

The Coordinator

In a program embracing the organization and maintenance of a substantial number of discussion groups, the director needs help.* Usually he begins with a part-time assistant recruited from among the past or present participants in the program – someone who can devote a part of his or her time to helping in the organization and management of groups.

While the coordinator should possess many of the qualities outlined above for the director, his most desirable traits are an outgoing disposition; an interest in people; energy, and commitment.

As the description "organizer-manager" indicates, the coordinator's job is to work with the groups. Some of his duties parallel those of the director. He attends the organization meetings, collects fees, distributes material, arranges for places of meeting and for audio-visual materials. He meets problems that the discussion leader or group members may have. He keeps an eye open for potential discussion leaders among group members, assists the director in the training of discussion leaders.

Where the study-discussion program sponsored by an institution takes in a *region,* rather than a city, the coordinator is essential.

Group Composition

One of the most exacting jobs that the discussion program director and his assistants face is that of getting participants into groups from which they can get the most benefit and to which they can make the best contributions. This is one of the important ways in which a study-discussion group differs from a "class." The chance to *contribute* may be one of the most important benefits. This is a matter, not only of the choice of subject (which can be handled in informal counseling), but also of prescribing group situations in which the participants will learn.

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*By himself a director can handle from 15 to 20 groups at least; whether he can exceed this number depends on his resourcefulness and energy, the size of territory covered, how long the program has been in operation, and the competence and experience of volunteer leaders. Some of the Test Center directors thought that a single full-time person could eventually handle from 20 to 35 groups. In the University of British Columbia a single full-time director was able—in the fall of 1959—to set up and supervise the management of 55 groups.

It is a baffling task. Sometimes there is only one group in a subject in the area, but where choice exists the question arises, should the group be *heterogeneous* or *homogeneous?*

Homogeneous and heterogeneous group situations present different kinds of problems for both the organizer-manager and the discussion leader. Most discussion leaders welcome groups in which the participants have similar backgrounds but diverse opinions.

Meeting Places

Most of the groups organized by the centers met in residences. Irving Lorge, commenting on the preponderance of meetings in private homes, suggests that "in terms of socialization this, in and of itself, may be the basis for developing strong interpersonal relations which continue throughout the years." A majority (54 per cent) of participants interviewed favored private homes as meeting places. Those who opposed homes as a place of meeting thought the meeting rooms were too small, or that the talk was more social than serious, or that the discussants felt inhibited by decorum. But most leaders and group organizers judged the advantages of meeting in homes to be greater than the disadvantages. The whole concept of "living room learning" — as shorthand for the study-discussion program used by adult groups meeting in homes — has attracted much attention.*

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*See Appendix D.

Chapter Ten

DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP

In this chapter we are concerned with how the participants, leaders, and others regarded the quality of the discussion leadership in the groups; what standards were used in judging discussion leadership; what patterns of leadership were employed in the various centers; what kinds of adults were leaders; how they were selected; what they seemed to be getting out of it; and how the leaders were trained.

"How Good was the Leadership?"

In one form or another this question was asked of every participant in the experiment. In the questionnaires analyzed by Lorge, the query was, "Did you enjoy the system of leadership that was used?" Two-thirds said, "Very much"; twelve per cent, "Somewhat"; two per cent, "Little" or "No"; and 20 per cent did not answer.

This looks like a substantial vote of approval, but on reflection we cannot be sure just what was being approved. Let us look at the replies in Southern California to the question, "What was good about the leadership?"

Twenty-four per cent defined "good leadership" to be that which aimed the discussions at issues and kept it "on the track."

Fifteen per cent defined "good leadership" as that which stimulated thinking.

On the other hand, 23.3 per cent thought the leadership good when the leader "involved the group" or "secured broad participation"; another 14 per cent thought it was good when the leader "didn't dominate the discussion," or "didn't assume too much control."

This situation reflects one of the bitterest controversies in the field of education: the battle between those who believe that in education the primary emphasis should be given to the *content* and those who believe that the primary emphasis should be given to the *process*.

The Experimental Discussion Project has worked on the assumption that the conflict between "content" and "method" is not a real issue. We assumed that participants want to get *knowledge and information* and *to engage in the exchange of ideas.* In the leaders' guides developed for the various programs we stressed the simultaneous "learning on two levels": the *content of the program* and the *process of the learning situation.*

Patterns of Discussion Leadership

Three major patterns of leadership in study-discussion groups were used:

1. A single leader.
2. Two leaders.
3. Leaders rotating, from meeting to meeting, or during a meeting.

The *single leader* system is most widely used. (The Lorge study showed 43 per cent of the groups were using it in 1956-57.) Those who favor it argue that the single leader is more likely to do a thorough job because he responds to his responsibility.

The system of *co-leaders* (employed in a quarter of the groups) has long been widely used in Great Books groups, and until quite recently was mandatory practice in all discussion groups established by the American Foundation for Political Education. (A good many of the leaders used in groups organized through the Experimental Discussion Project were originally trained by one or the other of these organizations.) The argument is that the co-leaders make up for one another's weaknesses, because this plan requires careful preparation, breaks down the "teacher-pupil" stereotype, and reassures those persons who are fearful of the responsibility of leading alone.

Rotation of leadership among discussion group members, in one form or another, was used by nearly a fifth of the groups reported on by Lorge. This is the most controversial of the systems of leadership.

Those who favor it say that the rotation of leadership is a good experience for participants: that it makes them better participants, reduces the focus on a single person as leader, and provides a testing and training ground for new leaders. Those who oppose it argue that group members are usually not equipped for leading, and that most members of the groups join to learn substance, not techniques. The use of rotation of leaders tends to strengthen the *social situation* in a group and weaken the *educational experience*. It works best in groups whose members are experienced with discussion and in groups whose members are well acquainted.

Qualities of the Discussion Leader

"The qualities that go into the making of a good leader," wrote the director of the Southern California study, "include a high degree of intelligence, an extremely broad and cultivated background, an outgoing sympathetic personality, a keen analytical mind, a high degree of self-confidence, and a willingness and ability to be directive and even controlling if necessary." He might have added that knowledge of the subject under discussion and an ability to "bring people out" were also important.

Some Conclusions

Anticipating the problem to be faced by center directors in training their volunteer leaders, early in 1954 the Fund commissioned the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults to prepare a study-discussion course on study-discussion itself. This program, prepared by Harry Miller, and entitled LEADING GROUP DISCUSSION was used in most of the Test Centers. Designed to be given in eight two-hour sessions, the course covered a variety of aspects of leadership, and provided for practice leadership sessions on subject matter similar to that in the various programs.

While most of the centers found the material in the course useful, they found the course too elaborate for their purposes. If discussion group leaders went through an eight-week training course, they could not be expected to lead a group in that period. Looking around for some method of giving leaders a good, concentrated leadership training experience, the directors developed the method of the *week-end institute*.

The week-end leadership institute became, in the last few years, the standard leadership training device used by nearly all of the Test Centers.

It has a number of things to recommend it. For one, it is a concentrated educational experience, but of a sufficient span of time to orient potential leaders to the program or programs which they are to handle, and to give them some experience in actual discussion leadership.

Second, it brings all the leaders together in one place for a time long enough for them to get acquainted. It also gives the director of the program and assistants an opportunity to get acquainted with these potential leaders and to observe them.

Although these institutes are sometimes called leader *training* institutes, (sometimes *education* institutes) a more accurate name for them might be leadership *development* institutes. The few hours are hardly adequate to furnish leaders with either training or education.

Leadership in a study-discussion program in the liberal arts is not so much a skill as an art. It requires certain capacities, qualities, or characteristics inherent in the personality. These can be brought to light and cultivated in the discussion situation. A leadership institute is an occasion whose primary purpose is to enable potential discussion leaders to begin to discover themselves, and to enable those professionals who are interested in the discovery of group-discussion leaders to help them begin a process of self-education.

More conventionally, the purpose of a leadership institute may be defined as a four-fold one: (1) to acquaint participants with the nature of liberal adult education; (2) to orient potential leaders to the liberal arts study-discussion group idea; (3) to introduce them to the specific purposes of the various programs, particularly of those they are expected to lead; (4) to give them an opportunity to try their hands briefly at leading group discussion.

It was common practice for most Test Centers to hold two leadership institutes annually. These were usually held in September and January. An institute usually opened on a Friday evening and closed the following Sunday afternoon. In this period, between 14 and 16 hours were usually given to meetings designed to acquaint the institute participants with information about the programs and let them practice discussion leadership techniques.

Planning an Institute

Planning for a leadership institute usually began at least two months in advance. Since the number of potential leaders to be invited depended upon the number of groups the center expected to form, the number of participants was usually based on the enrollments in the previous period and upon requests for membership in future groups.

Next, a list of potential leaders was prepared. This was developed from a variety of sources: current leaders sent in the names and qualifications of members of their existing groups; center staff members kept an eye out for potential leadership material in their visits to discussion groups; they talked to people outside the program, etc. The finally approved potential leaders were invited to attend the leadership institute.

Institute Program

After the usual preliminaries, an institute usually opened with a demonstration discussion. This was often put on by staff members, one of whom acted as leader. The content of this demonstration was sometimes taken from one of the programs. The demonstration discussion lasted about twenty minutes. It was followed by analysis and evaluation by the staff members who had not taken part in the discussion. At this point in the institute, the members usually assembled in small groups where they could get some actual experience in and make evaluations of discussion leadership.

One of the interesting developments in recent years in connection with these "work groups" at the leadership training institutes has been the growing attention given to *content*. Earlier institutes gave most time to skills of discussion leadership and scant attention to the content of the programs.

The small group meetings, "the work sessions," of institutes now usually devote as much attention to the content as to the process of discussion. In some instances, subject matter specialists are on hand to answer special questions regarding the topics under consideration. The work sessions themselves are divided according to content. Leaders of programs treating the humanities – MODERN POETRY, MODERN PAINTING, INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANITIES – all meet together. Leaders in the political science programs and the economic programs also meet in one group.

It has been estimated that between eight and ten teams of co-leaders can be given an opportunity to practice leading in each of the small training groups in the course of an institute. The number varies, of course, depending on the skills of the staff member in charge, the size of the group, and the sophistication of the participants. Where there are subject experts in these work sessions they are used to evaluate a given discussion in terms of issues missed, skill at probing of problems, interpretation of the subject matter, etc.

In line with the greater attention being given subject matter in the institutes, the U.C.L.A. staff decided, in the fall of 1958, to give special attention to the *content* problems connected with the programs in three weekly evening sessions for the institute participants immediately following the institute. At these sessions U.C.L.A. faculty members with special competence in the subjects under consideration played a major role. To these the staff invited also all current leaders, including many who did not participate in the institute. These evening meetings are conceived of as an extension of the sessions held in the institute and as part of a *continuing* leader-development program.

At these three evening sessions there were general orientation talks on (1) the theory of liberal arts education and its relationship to the discussion process; (2) the importance of logic and rhetoric in the learning process; and (3) the necessity for the discussion leader to be as good a listener as he is a "question-asker." "Demonstration discussions" were held, followed by analysis both by the staff members and by the participants in the training meetings.

"An institute will improve the performance of a good potential leader," said one director, "but it will do little for a poor one. To put it in a phrase: You can make a good leader better, but you can't make a poor leader good."

Chapter Eleven
COSTS AND FINANCING

The sixth and final element of the distribution and use of study-discussion programs to be reviewed is finance: What does it cost?

Here we must distinguish between expenses involved in program *production* (preparation, testing, revision, etc.) and the expenses incurred in their *distribution and use*. In this chapter we are concerned only with the latter, and, even more narrowly, with costs to the local sponsors. And here again we must rely on data from the Test Center Project.

The Fund absorbed the costs of the development of the programs described in Part One of this Report. Moreover, there were other *national* costs.

The Fund priced all the program materials, print and audio-visual, used in the Test Center Project, at a figure reflecting a fair estimate of their "cost of reproduction" in reasonable quantity, plus cost of handling and mailing. But this was not expected to cover cost of national promotion, or initiating and maintaining relationships with the sponsoring local institutions. The Fund absorbed these costs also.

Concerning *local* costs of *distribution and use* by the Test Center Project, the questions were: Given high quality programs; (1) What would be the local costs of getting them used? and (2) What percentage of these costs could be met by fees from participants?

The chief factors of these local costs were: staff salaries, rental of meeting rooms and audio-visual aids and equipment, program materials, telephone and postage, office supplies, travel, promotion, honoraria for leaders,* and leadership training institutes. In the "typical" budget, about 50 per cent went for staff salaries, 12 per cent for program materials, 12 per cent for promotion, and 12 per cent for expenses for discussion leaders and for leader training, with the balance for miscellaneous items.

The Centers were established with a four-year grant, with declining subsidies and increasing dependence on participants' fees, year by year. The Fund stipulated, as we have noted, that Centers charge fees of not less than $10 per participant ($18 per couple); careful cost accounting was kept.

Let us look at the experience of the three centers previously mentioned: those at the University of California, Los Angeles; Whittier College; and the University of Utah.

Below are figures for the three years 1955-58.

Year	*Total Groups*	*Total Participants*	*Total Expenses*	*Total Fee Income*	*Cost per Participant*	*Deficit per Participant*	*Percentage Self-Support*
		University of California, Los Angeles					
1955-56	42	675	$24,253	$ 6,800	$36.00	$25.85	28%
1956-57	69	1,414	$31,119	$13,314	$22.00	$12.60	42.8%
1957-58	146	3,284	$44,320	$32,900	$13.50	$ 3.48	74%
			Whittier College				
1955-56	33	547	$20,980	$4,805	$38.35	$29.60	22.9%
1956-57	43	965	$21,169	$6,178	$21.95	$15.50	29.2%
1957-58	39	639	$10.719	$4.291	$16.80	$10.05	40%
			University of Utah				
1955-56	15	257	$ 2.591	$ 527	$10.10	$ 8.05	20%
1956-57	45	659	$11.856	$2.654	$18.00	$14.00	22.4%
1957-58	89	858	$12.081	$7.764	$14.10	$ 5.05	64.3%

To interpret these figures properly one must bear in mind the significant differences in the situations faced by these three institutions.

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*In most cases these were nominal ($40 to $50 per ten-session course) and were intended to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses (meals, travel, baby-sitting, etc.).

The University of California at Los Angeles, as we have already pointed out, has one of the largest and most successful university extension operations in the country. It has resources for the preparation and selective distribution of attractive promotion brochures, and serves a population of well over eight million people. Through its newly established Liberal Arts Department it is able to include the promotion of study-discussion groups in a wider program of activities giving attention to continuing liberal education, including week-end residential institutes, lectures, lecture-discussion programs, etc. Each of these reinforces the others. In 1956-58 the programs achieved 74 per cent self-support.

Whittier College presents a different picture. It had no department of adult education nor tradition of support for continuing education. When it established its experimental liberal arts center in 1954, the entire venture had to start from scratch. The College offset 40 per cent of the program's expense from participants' fees in 1957-58.

The University of Utah faced still another problem. Like U.C.L.A. its extension division is strong and active. It has an administration sympathetic to the idea of adult study-discussion programs. But it is operating in an area which has a strong tradition of "free" adult education. When it first became a Test Center, the University of Utah tried to establish groups on the same fee schedule set by the other Centers. This proved to be unrealistic, and the University experimented with the sliding-scale fee structure described in Chapter Seven. This enabled it to expand its program. But as the figures above indicate, its expansion depends upon the University's absorbing a substantial deficit per participant.

Some Tentative Conclusions

As we indicated earlier in this section, the Test Center experiment yielded sufficient data to suggest these tentative conclusions:

1. That competent volunteers, recruited and trained as discussion leaders, can help to provide an educational experience in study-discussion groups which participants will pay for;
2. That fees from $10 to $14 per person for this experience are no barrier for most people interested in this kind of an educational activity;
3. That a well-handled center for the promotion, organization, and maintenance of study-discussion groups with at least one full-time person and with a reasonable fee structure can achieve a substantial, but not entire, measure of self-support.

Chapter Twelve

SOME CONCLUSIONS ABOUT DISTRIBUTION AND USE

In this second part of the Report we have dealt with the major aspects of the Fund's experimentation, chiefly through its Test Center Project, with the distribution and use of study-discussion programs.

The conclusion of Part One was that educationally valuable "packaged" study-discussion programs could be created around a wide range of topics using print and sometimes supplementary audio-visual materials.

The Test Center Project demonstrated that their extended distribution and use is possible, feasible, and worthwhile.

We have reviewed this experience as it related to six elements: sponsorship, participants, organization and management, discussion leadership, promotion and finance. Let us summarize our conclusions.

Sponsorship

Where the top administration of the sponsoring institution understands and supports the enterprise, and where the program is under competent direction, universities and colleges make good sponsors for study-discussion programs of the sort described in this Report.

Because of their greater resources, and because their geographical service areas are usually broader than those of colleges, universities may be considered more appropriate sponsoring agencies than colleges.

Participants

Study-discussion programs of the kind described in this Report attract the educated, i.e., those with some college education. Most of them are in the age-range of 30 to 55. Women outnumber men about six to four. For the most part the participants are "good citizens," active in community affairs, readers of opinion magazines, concerned with the problems of their time. They are in the middle and upper income brackets; they have usually resided in their communities for five years or more.

They come to the groups primarily because they care about their continuing liberal education, they want to exchange ideas and opinions with people who share their interests, and they seek stimulation to learn more about the subject areas under consideration.

Promotion

Study-discussion programs require special promotional efforts on the part of the local sponsoring institution. This promotion can be successful only if it is built on the demonstration in a community of the value of the study-discussion group experience. For this reason, word-of-mouth advertising is the most important aid to group recruitment. Attractively prepared individual brochures, mailed to carefully selected target audiences, have proved effective in stimulating interest. Telephone solicitation, attention to local organizations with special interest in specific subject matter, and newspaper stories, are also helpful.

Leadership

Two kinds of people are needed to advance the development of study-discussion program activities: *administrators* – "operators" who know how to promote, organize and maintain the study-discussion groups set up around these programs; and *discussion leaders* – people who know how to guide the learning experiences which the programs themselves are designed to make possible.

Administrators need the qualities and skills normally required to exercise these functions in other fields. Specifically, they need familiarity with the study-discussion programs, with ways of recruiting and maintaining discussion groups, and with recruiting and training of discussion leaders. In addition, a good liberal arts educational background, plus a genuine interest in their own continuing liberal education, is desirable, and perhaps essential.

Part-time *"coordinators"* – individuals who have skills in group recruitment and management and the ability to select and train volunteer discussion leaders – are essential to assist the administrator if any considerable expansion of study-discussion group programs is to be achieved.

Discussion leaders need skill in the use of discussion as a technique of learning, and competence and interest in the subject matter under discussion. Good discussion leaders are people with a background of liberal education, enthusiasm, an interest in people and in ideas.

Discussion leadership training is most effective when it can be conducted around a week-end institute, in which the leaders, actual or potential, may become thoroughly familiar with the study-discussion program idea and practice discussion leadership skill under competent guidance.

Finance

The cost of the extension of opportunities for study-discussion experience of the kind described in this Report is substantial. Support for the expansion of the program in any community will have to come from more than one source. Participants' fees can offset a considerable percentage of the total cost; the rest of the cost will have to be met either by the sponsoring institution or with contributions from other sources.

Here the concern is with the Arts: Discovering Modern Poetry; Looking at Modern Painting.

DISCOVERING MODERN POETRY
Modern Verse
DISCOVERING MODERN POETRY

Part Three

THE
SUMMING-UP

Chapter Thirteen

CONCLUSIONS—AND A LOOK AHEAD

Whatever final judgment is made about the Experimental Discussion Project, there is little question that it had a significant impact upon informal liberal adult education in general and adult group discussion in particular.

At a time when group discussion was being viewed almost exclusively as a *process*—to be effectively handled only in terms of the mastery of certain techniques—the Experimental Discussion Project helped focus attention on the fact that it must also have *content*.

At a time when many educators of adults were concentrating on the improvement of skills in controlling *emotional* behavior in group activity, the Project through its programs was urging that equal attention be given to the improvement of *intellectual* behavior: to the acquisition of skills of critical thinking and to some mastery of the rules of logic.

Through experimentation with a wide range of subject matter it demonstrated that the study-discussion approach to learning could be effectively employed broadly in the arts, humanities, and the social sciences and not just narrowly in philosophy and political science. And it explored various ways of developing such programs.

It pioneered in the use of audio-visual aids as materials enriching the adult study-discussion learning situation.

It conducted an intensive investigation into the character and methods of discussion leadership, as well as into ways and means for carrying on effective training programs for lay leaders.

It touched the lives of tens of thousands of people who, as participants, discussion leaders, "center" directors, or program developers, were involved in the total project. These were in hundreds of communities in nearly every state in the union. It assisted in the training of several thousands of persons as discussion leaders (and some have said that this in itself made the Project worth doing).

It contributed to a revival of the art of conversation. From Westchester County, N. Y., to Vancouver, B. C., discussion groups and study clubs are springing up in the living rooms of many metropolitan apartments and suburban homes.*

Throughout, the Project emphasized the need for adults to give sustained attention to continued learning – both as a means of individual enrichment and as preparation for active, responsible citizenship.

It constantly urged the importance of the study-discussion group method as one of the most effective and appropriate instruments for the promotion of liberal adult education.

Above everything else it affirmed a faith that is essential to the advance of continuing education in this or any other free country: that given adequate materials for study, and some help from educational institutions, individual adults can and will *themselves* develop the necessary leadership and participation skills to *take charge of their own continuing liberal education*. For it has demonstrated that the so-called "packaged programs" are not intellectual pabulum, but instead intellectual "do-it-yourself" kits, inducing and helping adults to begin the exciting adventure of self-directed learning.

This faith in the capacity and initiative of individual adults has, in recent years, been further fortified by research.

Finally, the Experimental Discussion Project initiated what was perhaps the first realistic appraisal of the *costs* of conducting informal study-discussion groups, led by lay leaders, under the auspices of institutions of higher learning.

Education – effective education – is always expensive. This is because it is always an individual – never a mass – process.

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*See Appendix D for article, "Who Says the Art of Conversation is Dead?"

A discussion group that provides each individual member opportunity for regular participation has to be comparatively small. This means that it is expensive to operate.

Study-discussion programs have, over the years, depended on four sources of support: (1) fees from participants; (2) contributions of services by group leaders and others (most discussion groups are organized and led by volunteers who contribute their time and energy to this activity just as they do to other community services); (3) contributions by local sponsoring agencies (these may be services or actual appropriations of money); and (4) grantors — including educational foundations.

The experience of several of the Test Centers indicates — as we have seen — that participants' fees can substantially offset the cost of promotion and operation. But there remain inescapable costs which cannot be met from this source. To attempt to meet these by raising the price of material, or fees, usually increases the cost of promotion, and/or decreases the enrollment.

The Project provided clear documentation — if any were needed — of the cold fact that even the most successful program of study-discussion groups cannot be *completely* self-supporting. There always remains a difference between the total cost per participant of providing the program and the amount the participant is reasonably able and willing to pay.

Should such a program be expected to be self-supporting? More and more educational institutions — impressed with the quality of learning that takes place in these groups — are inclined to say not. This form of liberal education is not out of line with the costs of other kinds of education, or of liberal education by other means. In fact, it might be shown that this is the most economical liberal education available. As programs grow in size the *cost per person* steadily declines. But as this growth occurs, there will also be growth in *cost of the total operation.* If study-discussion programs are to become a permanent part of any educational institution's offerings it must be assumed that fiscal responsibility will be broadly shared. Money to support them should come from many sources — in keeping with the wide benefits of the programs themselves.

There seem to be three possible approaches in a community: First, to plan for many groups — which requires a subsidy; second, for as many groups as will return an income from fees sufficient to support the operation — which means relatively few groups and a limited operation; and, third, for a few groups, whose participants pay low or modest fees sufficient only to cover the costs of the directors, who contribute their services. Where an institution or organization undertakes to organize only a few groups as a part of a larger program embracing other activities, cost is a negligible factor.

Continued Availability of Programs

As the Experimental Discussion Project drew to a close in 1958, the Fund sought ways in which it might assure the continued availability of the materials for some of its more successful programs. After exploration of a number of alternatives, the decision was made to seek to have them published through commercial or university presses. In some instances the materials will be available in much the same form in which they were used in the course of the Project. In others, the original materials have been revised into books designed for the general reader. (See Appendix E.)

Supplementary audio-visual materials, used in connection with some of the programs, will be made available through the Audio-Visual Center of Indiana University. (See Appendix E.)

Leadership Training Centers

In order to assist in the development of future lay leaders for study-discussion programs in various parts of the country, the Fund has made grants to a number of universities active in the promotion of discussion programming to help them set up leadership centers.* Staffs at these centers will not only put on training programs, but will also assist neighboring educational institutions to set up leadership development programs of their own.

Other Discussion Programs

There are many indications that in the next decade an ever-increasing number and variety of materials adaptable for group discussion will make their appearance. It is estimated that in 1959 more than 100,000 people were involved in study-discussion groups of one kind or another. An informal survey made by the Fund in 1958 revealed that there were groups sponsored by one or more of four national organizations in nearly 1700 communities in the United States.

Variations

The "packaged" study-discussion program discussed in this Report has consisted for the most part of printed materials, and such audio-visual aids as films, filmstrips, recordings, etc.

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*Most of the grants are for leadership training for purposes broader than study-discussion leadership, but study-discussion leadership training is included in them all. The institutions which have received grants for these purposes are: New York University, The Pennsylvania State University, Syracuse University, Western Reserve University, University of Oklahoma, University of California (Berkeley), and University of California, Los Angeles.

But the rise of television, and the continued use of radio, as instruments of continuing education, suggest the possibility that the future will see an increasingly close relationship between these mass media and informal group study-discussion.

Evidence that a successful partnership between the two can be established already exists.

We have noted (see p. 17) the radio-discussion experiment conducted in San Bernardino, California, where a broadcast of the *Ways of Mankind* series, synchronized with newspaper stories and listening-discussion groups, was so successful that the method was later adopted for a whole series of programs, most of them originating in that area. The basic idea was later transferred to television at Washington University, St. Louis, by its author, Eugene Johnson. Here television-discussion programs are playing an increasingly important part in a broadly conceived community development effort in that area.

YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY – one of the Fund's experimental programs – was adapted for television-discussion in Salt Lake City, and in Sioux City, Iowa. WORLD AFFAIRS ARE YOUR AFFAIRS, one of the early film-based discussion programs, was also used in several places in this way.

The Foreign Policy Association has experimented intensively with the adaptation to television of its annual series of *Great Decisions* discussion programs, notably in Boston, Mass.; Portland, Ore.; and Salt Lake City, Utah.

This development may be some time in coming on any extensive scale, because it requires extensive work in community organization and leader training to be successful. But in a day when transportation problems are becoming more complicated by the hour, it may prove the most effective as well as economical way to stimulate the development of large numbers of groups.*

In an age when young and old are increasingly engaged in perfecting skills of learning through exposure to pictures and sound, when tape machines, stereophonic sound recorders and films and slides will be standard equipment in an increasing number of homes, these media are destined to become an important part in the study-discussion "package" of the future.

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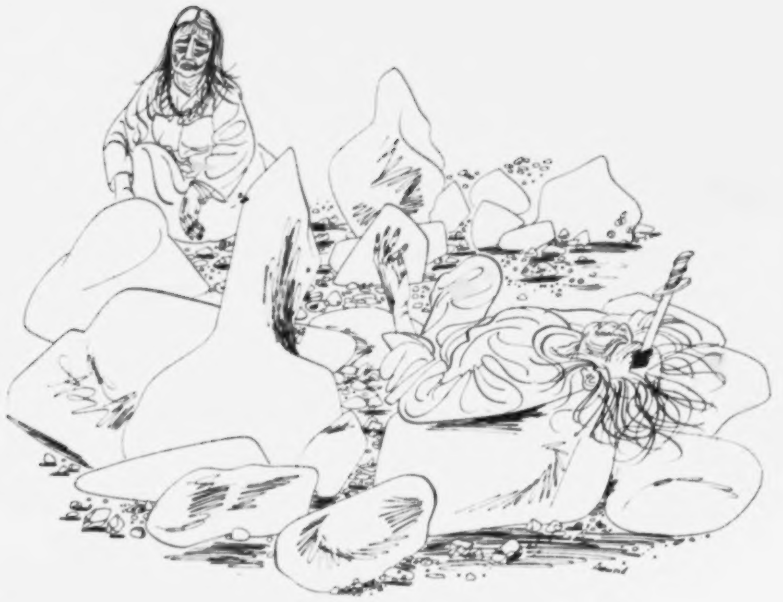
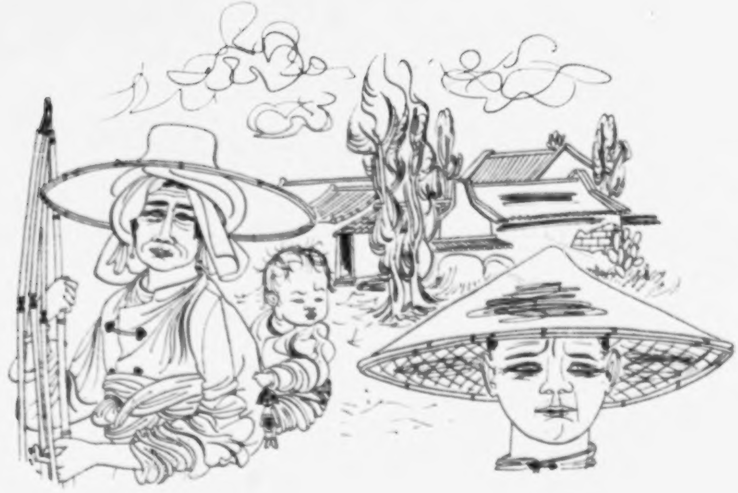
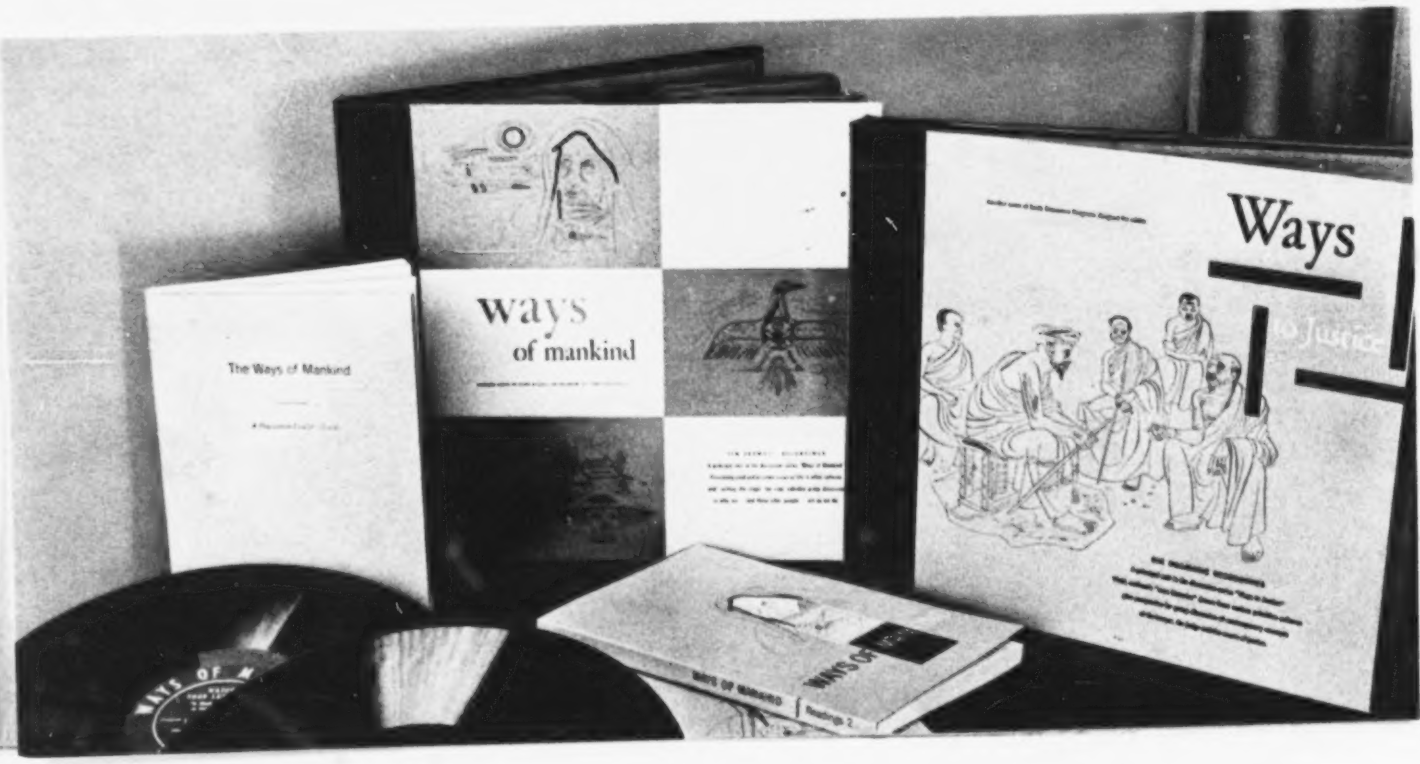
*New York University recently instituted an experimental "College of Independent Study"—in which the mass media and the study-discussion method will replace the formal lecture and classroom, for both "regular" matriculated students and adults.

Appendices





The invitation to learning should be attractive as well as important: materials should please the eye as well as the mind, and be such that people will want to keep them, and to keep them out in view. Line drawings, used in program material, including record albums, provide aesthetic unity.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Appendix A

OTHER STUDY-DISCUSSION PROGRAMS

As was reported in Chapter Three, the Project was responsible for the preparation of study-discussion programs in 21 different subject matter areas. Six of these programs have been discussed in Chapters Two and Three. The following are described in this Appendix:

International Affairs:

TRANSITION AND TENSION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA p. 93

Political Affairs:

GREAT ISSUES IN AMERICAN POLITICS p. 94
(Replacement of GREAT MEN AND GREAT ISSUES)
THE POWER TO GOVERN p. 95

Economic Affairs:

YOUR MONEY AND YOUR LIFE p. 96
*ECONOMIC REASONING p. 97

Social Affairs:

*YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY p. 98
THE SHAPE OF OUR CITIES p. 100
THE MASS MEDIA p. 101
EDUCATION FOR A FREE SOCIETY p. 103
*AGING IN THE MODERN WORLD p. 103
*PARENTHOOD IN A FREE NATION p. 104
HUMAN FREEDOM p. 107

The Humanities:

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANITIES p. 107
*LOOKING AT MODERN PAINTING p. 109
*DISCOVERING MODERN POETRY p. 110
SHAKESPEARE AND HIS THEATRE p. 111

Note: Starred items have since been revised and are (or will be made) available through commercial or university publishers. (See Appendix E.)

TRANSITION AND TENSION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

From time to time after the release of the WORLD AFFAIRS series for limited distribution, we received inquiries about a "sequel series," something in the general area of international understanding. We considered a number of attractive ideas. One was to experiment with a series of discussions on one country, which would be an exploration in depth. Another was to do several "regional" programs, keeping to the "country" approach that featured the first version of the WORLD AFFAIRS series, but selecting countries related to each other in a given region, and thereby linking them to common issues and problems. The latter approach was finally adopted.

The region selected was Southeast Asia, an area not well known to most Americans, but coming increasingly to public attention in recent years. In the fall of 1956 Nathaniel Peffer, Professor of International Relations at Columbia University, a recognized authority on the region, and a man long familiar with adult education, undertook to prepare an experimental series on the topic.

His plan was relatively simple. The series would open with a review of the area ("The volcano and its components") and then proceed in the next six sessions to provide background on each of the countries making up the region. The last three sessions would then review and sharpen the issues common to all the nations in the area and also the problems faced by the West, particularly the U. S., in helping the new nations in this region preserve their new independence and achieve national integrity. Each session consisted of an essay by Peffer and a series of short but authoritative readings from these countries as well as about them.

We got copies of an excellent map of the Southeast Asia area from the National Geographic Society and included these with each participant's manual. Peffer and John Walker Powell collaborated in developing a leader's guide.

It was agreed at the outset that, as in the case of the WORLD AFFAIRS series, the use of films in connection with the SOUTHEAST ASIA programs would be desirable. But when it came to finding 16 mm films that were both appropriate and available, difficulties proved even more formidable than those faced in the earlier program. We finally selected six films* and used them in the tests conducted with the experimental materials.

The response to the program was good, but reactions to the films were mixed. Mindful of the experience in WORLD AFFAIRS ARE YOUR AFFAIRS, the series was revised so as to make it possible to use or to omit the films.

GREAT ISSUES IN AMERICAN POLITICS

The pioneering program, GREAT MEN AND GREAT ISSUES IN OUR AMERICAN HERITAGE, had been valuable as an experiment, and one of the lessons learned was that available films sharply restricted the choice of subjects and the method of treatment. By 1955, a totally new series seemed in order. Professor Richard Hofstadter, Professor of History on the faculty of Columbia University, undertook to prepare it.

***The New South Asia* (Introductory Session); *Burma, Buddhism and Neutralism* (Burma); *Letter from Indonesia* (Indonesia); *Cheewit Chowna* (Thailand); *This is Malaya* (Malaya); *Planning Our Foreign Policy.*

The program he developed was based on issues.

"We discuss issues for somewhat the same reason that we read history or even for the reason that we read fiction," Hofstadter wrote in his introduction, "that is, because the events of history, as well as the events of our own time, provide us with an enormous arena of thought in which we can define our values and realize some of the possibilities of our minds. We attend, for instance, at the great spectacle of the attempted dissolution of the federal union and abolition of slavery, not only because we hope that it will give us answers to what we do about this or that problem of our own time, but also because the issues involved are compelling for us in the very definition of our own humanity. We read and discuss these issues in somewhat the same spirit with which we go to great literature, and that is to find in them clues to the possibilities of life."

A great issue Hofstadter defined as one which had in it an element of tragedy. "It has been said that tragedy occurs, not where there is conflict between right and wrong, but where there is conflict between right and right."

Hofstadter made an historical approach to both the selection and the arrangement of issues.

To provide minimum background reading for the group discussion of these issues, Hofstadter selected excerpts from the writings and speeches of men and women who took opposing points of view *at the times* the issues were being most hotly debated. The selected readings, plus introductory essays to each session prepared by Hofstadter, were included in the participant's manual. In contrast to its predecessor, the GREAT ISSUES program used only one film – a specially edited 30-minute excerpt from the first of the three Omnibus television programs on the Constitution (for which Hofstadter had served as consultant).

The series is unique in that it invites consideration of the selected issues in three dimensions: the issues as they were present in the early years of the republic; as they appear today; and what events in the intervening years have done to alter their impact on the country.

THE POWER TO GOVERN

For some time after the development of the GREAT MEN AND GREAT ISSUES series, the possibility had been considered of developing another program in the field of political affairs which might be a "follow-up" to the earlier series, and not simply a replacement. Such a program, it was agreed, should center around the American system of government, showing the relationship of the three branches, and the problems created by their somewhat ambiguous relationships. We took the idea to

Peter H. Odegard of the Department of Political Science at the University of California, author of a number of books on American politics. He and his colleague, Victor G. Rosenblum (now at Northwestern University), prepared an experimental version. This was completed and mimeographed in time for a tryout with several test groups in the fall of 1956.

It was decided to prepare, in addition to the usual readings, a set of short tape-recordings to be used with each program in this series. These would be in the form of dialogues between the two authors about the subject of each individual meeting. They would be approximately 10 to 15 minutes in length, and designed to bring out a few central issues, and fresh case-history material.

Groups testing the series, though critical of parts of the manual, liked it, and, though they thought the tapes were too long, approved of them as a supplementary device. Following test and review, the materials were thoroughly overhauled by the authors. The tapes were rewritten by Powell, reduced to about five minutes each, and transferred to recordings. In its revised form, the program was published in 1957.

While the program has been slow to attract interest among adult groups, it has drawn the attention of a growing number of political science instructors who are using both the printed material and the recordings in classes and special seminars on the separation of powers.

YOUR MONEY AND YOUR LIFE

The focus of this series, YOUR MONEY AND YOUR LIFE, was the relationship between the concepts of inflation and taxation. Work on the first version of it was entirely an internal venture of the Project.

The initial plan of the series, prepared by Robert Pettengill, proposed several novel departures from previous practices in program development. It was a "self-teaching discussion series" designed to be carried out by an adult group with a minimum of outside help. Using selected readings, charts, films and other graphic aids, and built around eight "agenda topics," it was intended to create a flexible structure within which interested individuals could conduct a critical examination of two of the most important aspects of modern economic life.

Ten sessions were planned, but only eight topics were suggested. It was expected that the groups would pick two of the topics on which they would spend the extra two sessions.

Materials for study in the program included charts and statistics, and instructions were included on their use. One of the major purposes of the series was to encourage participants to think critically about economic problems, and to learn to distinguish between fact and opinion in the field; therefore, several "rating charts" for individual use were developed, which asked individuals to analyze their own attitudes on, and assess their information about, the subjects under consideration.

The program was first tried out with test groups in the spring of 1953. While there was general endorsement of the idea behind the series, the materials proved too demanding and too complicated to be handled by lay leaders within the time-span set for it. Two economists, J. Fred Weston, of the University of California at Los Angeles, and Lawrence Senesh, of the Committee for Economic Development, were brought in to work on other versions of the program. Further work was suspended in 1955, when the Brookings Institution program on ECONOMIC REASONING became available.

From this experience we learned an important lesson in program development: that flexibility was not gained by asking the groups to decide to which topics they wanted to give longer attention. They would have been able to do so at the close of the series, but were not before it began or while it was in progress. The participants and leaders had joined expecting to be guided, and without the means to guide themselves. A rigidly structured program has, of course, both strengths and weaknesses. These modifications increased the weaknesses without increasing the strengths.

ECONOMIC REASONING

In the spring of 1952 the Fund sought the advice of a group of leading economists* on how to develop a study-discussion program in economics. After two meetings this group recommended: (1) that the target of the program should be the "average adult concerned about his citizenship responsibilities;" (2) that the "content of the proposed program should focus on the gross national product, its determinants and its composition;" and (3) that an "experimental approach should be used, with an economist engaged to prepare the materials and to test them in actual discussion groups as he proceeded."

Robert D. Calkins, president of The Brookings Institution, was asked how such a program might be developed. In the fall of that year, he made a proposal, on behalf of his organization, which began as follows: "At the present time there is available no small, incisive volume that furnishes the layman with a suitable introduction to economic reasoning, particularly from the national income approach. What is needed is an introductory treatment that cuts through the historical and descriptive material available elsewhere, the advanced refinements of theory and professional technicalities, to set forth in straightforward, simple language the relevant conceptions and relationships most useful to the adult beginner who seeks to be an informed layman rather than a professional economist.

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*Douglas V. Brown, John K. Galbraith, Frederick H. Harbison, A. D. H. Kaplan, Max F. Millikan, Theodore W. Schultz, Richard M. Bissell, Jr., Sumner Slichter, and Horace Taylor.

"Such a volume, being of necessity limited in scope, should concern itself with the general facts and intellectual tools required for the analysis of typical economic problems confronting American citizens – problems arising out of the day-to-day operation of the American economy. These, for the most part, are the problems of public policy affecting national income, and they are problems on which the responsible citizen should hold informed opinions."

The following spring, the Fund made a grant to The Brookings Institution to prepare such a book. Preparation was assigned to Marshall A. Robinson (now a member of the Brookings staff); and two other professors – Herbert C. Morton of Dartmouth, now also with Brookings, and James D. Calderwood of Claremont College (California) Graduate School.

The book in the form of ten separate pamphlets was tested for study-discussion in the spring of 1955. Substantially revised, the work was published in book form by The Brookings Institution early in 1956. A paperback edition, designed for use by study-discussion groups, and accompanied by a specially prepared discussion leader's guide, was issued at the same time through the Project.

The purpose of the program, in Dr. Calkins' words, was to introduce participants to "a way of thinking about economic issues." It proposed to help them (1) identify economic problems and clarify issues through a study of their background and origin; (2) identify the objectives and requirements that must be met in treating the problem; (3) pose the alternative courses of action and analyze their probable consequences; and (4) appraise the alternatives and decide how well each alternative fulfills the objectives and requirements.

Both the book and ten-session discussion program built around it have been widely regarded as important contributions to citizen education in economics. It has been translated into eight other languages: three in India, as well as Arabic, Japanese, Korean, Farsi (Iran), and Spanish.

YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY

In the years of 1950 and 1951 a series of 15-minute radio programs entitled "The People Act" was broadcast by the National Broadcasting Company network, under the sponsorship of the Twentieth Century Fund. Originated by Elmore McKee, the series was based on the simple but powerful idea that ordinary citizens, aware of common community problems and willing to make the effort, could rally other people to effective action. McKee gathered evidence that this was not only possible, but that in many of today's communities *it had been done*. He looked for, and found, success stories: "case histories" of spontaneous citizen action to solve pressing community problems. Dramatizations of these case histories constituted the content of "The People Act" radio programs.

The first series attracted wide and favorable attention. When The Ford Foundation set up the Radio and Television Workshop in 1951, McKee was commissioned to develop another 26 programs around this general theme. These were carried over the Columbia Broadcasting System. Inquiries began coming in from all parts of the country from citizens asking for advice and assistance in handling *their* community problems. The People Act Committee was set up, composed of individual educators in various parts of the country with a special interest in community development. The Fund for Adult Education made a grant to Pennsylvania State College to establish a People Act Center which could operate under the supervision of this Committee to handle inquiries.

In 1953, after several conferences with one of the members of this Committee, Francis C. Rosecrance, then Associate Dean of the School of Education, New York University, the Fund made a grant to that university to set up the American Community Project, whose purpose would be to preserve, and disseminate in more flexible form, some of the ideas presented in the radio series.

To assist the new Project in making its plans, Rosecrance called together a score of people, both professional and non-professional, interested in community development, for a four-day conference in Garden City, New York, in the spring of 1953. From this conference, and from consultation with other interested individuals, emerged the idea of a series of study-discussion programs, eventually entitled YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY, which would focus on the problems of community development.

Rosecrance supervised the planning of materials. Eleanor A. Eaton, executive director of the American Community Project, assisted by J. Carson Pritchard, on leave from West Georgia College, arranged for their preparation and production.

As planned, the materials were to be used by any group of citizens interested in establishing a series of experiences designed to do these things: "(1) help them to understand the importance of the local community in this mid-twentieth century; and (2) help them realize that American citizenship carries with it the privilege and responsibility of doing more than voting, paying taxes, and serving the country in some military or civilian capacity—namely the responsibility for taking continuous *and active* part in affairs of the local community."

The YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY series was designed for eight weekly two-hour meetings, each part of an integrated whole. Materials included a combined "Guide for Participants and Discussion Leaders," which outlined the content for the entire series; contained descriptions of the various readings and audio-visual aids employed in each session; suggested procedures for handling each session, questions for discussion, notes for discussion leaders; and gave a bibliography of suggested readings. They also included: eight specially prepared essays, to be read in advance of each meeting; four filmstrips; two recordings; a 16-mm sound motion picture; and the Comparator. The Comparator, one of the learning-tools devised for the program, was an instrument especially developed for use by members of the group in analyzing a community; it was a booklet of illustrated charts containing 36 factual questions and 18 questions of opinion, all of basic importance in understanding a community. There was also a "Master Comparator" chart, 36" x 60" in size, supplied to each group, to be used in presenting facts and opinions gathered.

An experimental version of the YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY series was completed in 1954 and immediately tried out in cooperation with eight universities and colleges* in various parts of the country. These institutions organized a total of 31 discussion groups in small communities and neighborhoods in their immediate areas. The results of this test-run demonstrated the program's general workability and gave guidance to the staff of the American Community Project for revision. The program was published and made available for limited distribution in 1955.

By 1957, when the original stock of materials was nearly exhausted, the Fund authorized New York University to make a survey of the use of the program in the intervening years. The results of this survey, made by Curtis and Dorothy Mial, indicated continuing interest in its use, and pointed up the need for improvement of some of the materials. The University then engaged the Mials to prepare a revised version. Under the title *Our Community*, this was published by the New York University Press early in 1960.

THE SHAPE OF OUR CITIES

The sprawling growth of population in our huge urban complexes has not only created great problems for government at all levels but also excited interest in the various conceptions of desirable city and regional *designs*. Should the physical changes which are taking place in the cities and their suburbs be allowed to happen in random fashion, or should they be planned? And if planned, what shape should they take?

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*These were: New York University, Goddard College, University of Georgia, University of Utah, University of California at Los Angeles, University of Michigan, University of North Carolina, and the University of Kansas City.

At the suggestion of John Osman, a Vice-President of the Fund who had long been interested in this problem, the Project staff decided early in 1956 to have a study-discussion program developed in this area. José Luis Sert, dean of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University, and an internationally recognized authority in urban planning and design, was invited to prepare the series of programs. Working with Jacqueline Tyrwhitt, an associate at the School of Design, also well known in the field, Sert prepared an experimental series of ten programs bearing the title THE SHAPE OF OUR CITIES.

The outline of the "course" was simple and direct. The authors proposed to focus attention on "matters and questions relating to the *visualization of new and better cities,*" through exposing group participants to a variety of selected readings, representative of different points of view, and many pictures illustrating the concepts to which they wished to direct discussion. For testing, the pictures essential for understanding and discussing urban design* were assembled and reproduced in a unique layout involving the use of accordion folders.

The materials for the series were tried out with discussion groups, many composed of individuals with a special interest in city planning, in the fall of 1957, and were, on the whole, well received. However, difficulties arose in preparing the program for commercial publication, and it was abandoned.

THE MASS MEDIA

In 1954, the Project commissioned Edgar Dale of Ohio State University, at that time a part-time consultant for the Fund, who had worked on earlier discussion programs and who was especially interested in the subject, to prepare an experimental program. Working with Robert W. Kilbourn, Dale produced an experimental series entitled THE CITIZEN AND THE MASS MEDIA early in 1955.

The approach was comprehensive. Starting with a review of what was meant by the "mass media," the series moved on to consider what was known about their effects. Separate sessions were devoted to individual media.

Materials for the program included a participant's manual, a taped panel discussion on comic strips, and a sample short film for children. The manual contained short background essays by the authors, sample questions, suggested readings and a brief guide for leaders. It contained also suggested "projects" which individual participants in the program might engage in between the discussion meetings: visits to libraries, radio stations, bookstores, and newsstands, etc. in the community.

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*The pictures assembled to illustrate the major concepts discussed in the series received wide and favorable attention when they were exhibited at the center of a display in the Exhibit Hall of the Harvard School of Design, bearing the title of the course. One of the commissions of the United Nations sought and received permission to transport it to Tokyo for a U.N.-sponsored conference on city planning in the summer of 1958.

Groups testing the materials were lukewarm. They were impressed with the quality of material in the essays but had difficulty in finding "issues" to discuss. The sessions on the comics and television tended to center on ways and means of controlling their accessibility to children. Many of the questions assumed a familiarity with the contents of the various mass media which, it turned out, was not warranted. While a few participants welcomed and followed up the various "extra-curricular" projects suggested, most did not.

The Project staff decided to take a new tack on the development of a program in this field. Since the major problems of the control and the effect of the mass media were common to all, why not concentrate attention on the newer ones, the so-called electronic mass media – radio, television, and films? Gilbert Seldes, one of America's best-known writers, whose books, "The Seven Lively Arts," "The Great Audience," and "The Public Arts," have won him recognition as an authority in this field, was invited to try his hand at the preparation of a program. The result, in 1957, was a new series, tentatively entitled YOU AND THE MASS MEDIA, which invited participants to examine the "relation between the vast entertainment-and-communication enterprises of the United States and the independent thinking man, the individual citizen, the public." "The questions," Seldes noted in his introduction, "to which we are trying to find intelligent answers are simple ones: How do the mass media affect the individual? Can they – and should they – have other effects? How can the citizen who cherishes his independence of thought influence the mass media?"

A participant's manual, containing long, specially-written background articles on each session's topic, constituted the basic material for the series. The articles presented information on the communications revolution of our time, current methods employed to create audiences, the effects of the mass media on various segments of the population, the problems of regulation and control, etc. These were supplemented by selected tapes and films, and by a variety of carefully-chosen readings.

Since the focus was on problems common to all the media under consideration, the issues emerged with greater clarity. Test group reactions were generally favorable to the new treatment. However, Seldes' thoroughly analytical approach tended to rob the subject at certain points of needed elements of controversy, and, a revision, tentatively called THE NEW MASS MEDIA: CHALLENGE TO A FREE SOCIETY, is now in progress.

EDUCATION FOR A FREE SOCIETY

In the fall of 1954, one of the Fund's vice-presidents, G. H. Griffiths, recommended the preparation of an experimental series on education in a free society. "In basic conception," he wrote, "this would be a companion piece to Ethel Kawin's program PARENTHOOD IN A FREE NATION (see page 104 of this Report). Just as in this program an attempt is made to examine the implications for the parent-child relationship inherent in the basic commitments of a free society, so in the course suggested there would be an examination of the educational implications inherent in the basic commitments of a free society."

The Project staff invited Alexander Meiklejohn to prepare the materials for the projected series. Built around the definition of goals and values which education should serve in a democracy and some of the choices which confront Americans today, the series was designed for ten programs.

Supplemented by taped recordings of dialogues between Meiklejohn and John Walker Powell, the materials were tested in the fall of 1957. Response was ardent, both favorable and unfavorable. Because education is so controversial and wide-ranging a subject, perhaps no one person's writings alone can satisfactorily serve as background reading for its study and discussion. At any rate, the program was not developed for widespread use.

AGING IN THE MODERN WORLD

In the United States our average life expectancy has been extended to seventy years, an increase of 30 years since 1850. An equivalent of 20 years of this added life expectancy is vouchsafed to us as time free from the traditional adult responsibilities of work and parenthood. In the fall of 1953, the Fund called together a group of experts for a two-day meeting in New York to explore the possibilities of a study-discussion program on the implications of these massive and simple facts.* As a result, an agreement was made in 1955 with the University of Michigan's Institute for Human Adjustment, Division of Gerontology, for the purpose of preparing a study-discussion program on this subject. The series which resulted – prepared under the direction of Clark Tibbitts, then Chairman of the Committee on Aging, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare; and Wilma Donahue, Chairman, Division of Gerontology, University of Michigan – was completed in the fall of 1955; it was given a successful trial the following spring with a dozen groups in Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, and California, and published in the spring of 1957.

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*The following were present at this meeting: Clark Tibbitts, Wilma Donahue, Verne Burnett, Samuel Gould, Louis Kuplan, Ollie Randall, Nathan Shock, Hilda Smith, and Fund staff members.

The purpose of the program, defined by its authors, was to provide materials for study and discussion that would help men and women "(1) to understand the nature and significance of population aging . . . (2) to recognize the value of assessing basic individual needs, capacities, outlooks, interests, and conceptions of self . . . (3) to identify experiences which will further the growth and development of personality and lead to new useful and creative roles which will provide a sense of life-fulfillment in our changing society — the general objective in view."

The program, entitled AGING IN THE MODERN WORLD, was designed for nine sessions, each built around a specially-written background essay on a topic related to the subject of aging.* The essays, assembled in a participant's manual and accompanied by "questions to think about" and a short suggested reading list, constituted the minimal readings for the program. A companion volume, *A Book of Readings,* contained a selection from the writings of various people who throughout the centuries have pondered growing old, old age, and uses of leisure.

Several audio-visual materials were specially prepared for use in the program: a recording of a panel discussion reviewing briefly the topics to be discussed (designed to be played at the organization meeting), and three films: "Aging as a Modern Social Achievement," "The New Prime of Life," and the "Adventures of J.Q.P."

A 68-page discussion leader's guide completed the roster of materials.

The authors conceived the program as "a pioneering effort . . . designed, on the one hand, to enable us as individuals to find ways of achieving meaningful personal goals, and on the other, to assist in building a more favorable climate than has existed hitherto." Experience with the program to date indicates that, while it reaches both objectives, it is more attractive to those who regard aging as a *social* problem than it is to those who regard it as a *personal* problem. The program has been put to one use which was not anticipated: it has proved an excellent brief "orientation course" on aging for professional and volunteer workers in recreational, educational, and social agencies.

In 1960 the printed materials were re-edited by John Walker Powell into a single volume for the general reader and published by Prentice-Hall, Inc. under the title *Aging in Today's Society.*

PARENTHOOD IN A FREE NATION

One of the most significant and widely used of all the study-discussion programming ventures initiated through the Experimental Discussion Project began with a two-day conference called by the Fund in the summer of 1952.* Participants were told that the Fund was interested in developing a discussion program for all parents independent of any affiliation they might have with a particular group; and that it should take into consideration what was now going on and, therefore, not duplicate or conflict with current educational efforts but constitute a new approach designed to make a significant contribution to programming in parent education. Those attending the conference were asked to make recommendations in writing. A plan proposed by Ethel Kawin, at that time Lecturer in Education at the University of Chicago and Coordinator of the nationwide Expanded Parent Education Program for the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, was adopted for exploration.

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*In addition to Tibbitts and Donahue, the following writers contributed essays: Robert J. Havighurst, Leo W. Simmons, Evelyn Millis Duvall, C. Hartley Grattan, Reed Harris, and Ernest W. Burgess.

To bring the program into existence, a Parent Education Project was established at the University of Chicago in April, 1953, under a two-year grant from the Fund. Its purpose was "to develop materials and methods of presentation which will help parents to acquire the knowledge and attain the understanding which they need to bring up children who will become mature, responsible citizens, able to function in and maintain a free, democratic society."

Miss Kawin developed a tentative descriptive list of six major desirable characteristics of citizens in a democratic society and submitted the list to a panel of eight scholars** for their judgments and suggestions. The final list, benefiting from the review by these authorities, then became the core concepts of this parent education study-discussion program.

These concepts provided the essential framework for the study-discussion program PARENTHOOD IN A FREE NATION, which Miss Kawin developed and tried out in mimeographed form in the fall of 1953, with four parent groups sponsored by public school systems in Illinois and one group at the University of Chicago.

As a result of this preliminary tryout, the materials were revised and tested in a nationwide experimental program in the fall of 1954. This tryout included approximately 100 groups located in 18 states and two Canadian provinces. About 2000 persons participated in these study-discussion groups, under professional leaders who had taken training for the program in a workshop at the University of Chicago. Evaluations from leaders and individual members of these groups were so favorable that plans were made for further development of the program. Experimental groups had recommended that a *Manual for Leaders and Group Members* and a series of Age-Period Courses, to supplement the Basic

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*Present, in addition to Fund staff members, were: John Diekhoff, Ralph Eckert, Walter Goldschmidt, Robert Havighurst, Ethel Kawin, Ralph Ojemann, and Sybil Richardson.

**Robert J. Havighurst, Helen L. Koch, William C. Menninger, Esther Middlewood, Ralph Ojemann, Sybil Richardson, Benjamin Spock, and Ruth Strang.

Course, be prepared. A second and a third grant were given by the Fund to develop and extend the program.

The same conceptual framework used for the Basic Course runs through the Age-Period Courses, but with implications for, and applications to, each period of child development. The use of already existing books, pamphlets and films as materials for these courses was tried out by more than a dozen groups, with discussion guides designed by the Parent Education Project. None of these groups found the materials satisfactory for their Age-Period Courses. In response to their requests, the writing of additional booklets for systematic courses on each of five age periods was undertaken. The booklets now available include:

Readings for the Basic Course (133 pages)
A Manual for Leaders and Group Members (162 pages)
Early Childhood (in preparation)
Middle Childhood (102 pages)
Later Childhood (115 pages)
Adolescence (142 pages)

The PARENTHOOD IN A FREE NATION discussion program differs from other discussion programs initiated by the Experimental Discussion Project in several significant respects.

In the first place, it is recommended that only professional persons should train leaders for this program. These professional leaders should be persons whose own field of work includes a background of child development and guidance and parent and family-life education, as well as group discussion. It is recommended also that any leader, professional or lay, should have been through the *Basic Course* and also have had some training in the use of PARENTHOOD IN A FREE NATION materials and methods, before attempting to lead a study-discussion group in this program. These recommendations were suggested by the 1092 evaluations of the nationwide Experimental Program in 1954. They are based upon general recognition of the fact that the field of parent-child relations is "emotionally charged," and that high standards of leadership training must be maintained to insure a program of parent education that functions in a sound and constructive way. Most of the professional leaders participating in this program were trained in a series of Summer Workshops held at the University of Chicago. These leaders have subsequently trained other professional and also lay leaders in their own states or communities. The Parent Education Project has records of 1004 leaders who have had training in this program. Of these, 555 (55 per cent) have led groups. The great majority of these leaders are lay leaders, who serve as unpaid volunteers.

A second distinctive policy of this program is that every participating group must be sponsored by an institution or organization, preferably one interested in trying out this program with the possibility of extending and maintaining it as part of a continuing program in parent education. There have been 293 such sponsors for the 885 study-discussion groups in PARENTHOOD IN A FREE NATION. Sponsors have included universities and colleges, schools, parents' associations, Test Centers and Test Cities of The Fund for Adult Education, and various other educational, social service, religious, and community agencies. For more than half of the groups, two institutions or organizations cooperated as co-sponsors for the program.

Another distinctive feature of the program is the manner in which provision is made for group members to share in responsibility for the program at each meeting. It is suggested that at the opening meeting the group divide itself into six subgroups, one for each major topic of the course. Each member chooses a topic in which he is especially interested (with provision for alternate choices). Each subgroup accepts responsibility for planning the presentation and discussion of their chosen topic at one meeting of the total group.

HUMAN FREEDOM

For its summer festival of 1952, the Institute for Humanistic Studies at Aspen, Colorado, chose as its theme "Human Freedom." Assistance in the preparation and publication of a book of readings on this topic was requested and received from The Fund for Adult Education. Shirley R. Letwin, under the direction of Mortimer Adler, compiled this volume.

The readings, 148 selections from 106 works written by 75 authors, were largely classic and philosophical. The Project staff decided to try out the book as a basis for informal group study-discussion. Charles R. Nixon, assistant professor of political science at the University of California, wrote a leader's guide for the material. In the spring of 1953 this "book-based" experimental discussion program was tried out in several groups in and around Pasadena, California.

Evaluation of the results showed interest in the subject but dissatisfaction with the materials. Chief objections were: the fragmentary character of the readings (too many points of view and too little time to devote to each one); too great emphasis on classic authors and not enough attention to contemporary writings on this problem.

Further work on this program was suspended.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANITIES

An attempt to introduce adults to such a broad and complicated field as the humanities in a study-discussion program of ten or eleven sessions may seem sheer impertinence. When in 1953 we first approached Russell Thomas, chairman of the Humanities Department at the University of Chicago, with the suggestion, this was his general reaction, later repeated in the opening sentences of the introduction to the program which his staff prepared: "Let us be frank from the beginning. If the realm of humanistic achievement could be mastered in ten easy lessons, the results would not be worth the small expenditure of time." But we had some reason to believe, even then, that such an attempt need be neither an impertinence nor an impossibility. A year previously the Fund had made a grant to Stephens College for an experimental program in this field to use with its alumnae. Within the limited purposes set for it, the results had been encouraging.*

Thomas and his staff undertook the preparation of an experimental program as a "challenging assignment," but they did so skeptically. They decided to build the program around as comprehensive a presentation of the humanities as possible, in order to give the group participants some grasp of the magnitude of humanistic inquiry and expression. The program was planned to present also some conception of what distinguishes the humanities from other fields. Main attention was to be centered on works representing various fields of human artistic achievement, in which "participants will find immediate pleasure in the exercise of the arts of reading, looking, and listening."

The test version of the HUMANITIES program was completed in the spring of 1955 and immediately tried out with some 14 groups. Although parts of the program, notably that on music, were severely criticized, the general reaction was good. After a careful revision the program was released for limited distribution in the fall of 1955.**

The materials for the initial edition of AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANITIES were (1) a 205-page participant's manual (including a guide for discussion leaders), which outlined the eleven-session program and contained background essays, questions for discussion, and a bibliography; (2) a companion volume containing the poems, short stories, and essays to be discussed in the sessions on literature; (3) two recordings containing examples and analyses of various musical forms; (4) a portfolio of picture reproductions and slides to accompany the sessions on the visual arts.

Since its publication the HUMANITIES series has proved one of the most widely used programs sponsored in the Experimental Discussion Project, although certain parts (particularly the music sessions) continued to be difficult for lay discussion leaders to handle. In 1958, following study of the problem, arrangements were made with the University to revise the series thoroughly under the direction of Charles Wegener. In the revised version nearly all of the material for the music sessions was placed on four recordings – two of which were designed for home use by group participants. All of the visual materials were assembled in reproductions and bound into a supplementary pamphlet. And all of the reading material (including selections for study) was placed in the participant's manual. A separate discussion leader's manual was prepared.

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*This series of ten study-discussion programs had been prepared by members of the Stephens faculty under the direction of Marjorie Carpenter.

**This is the version described and discussed in Kaplan, *Study-Discussion in the Liberal Arts*, in STUDIES IN ADULT GROUP LEARNING IN THE LIBERAL ARTS.—ed. note.

LOOKING AT MODERN PAINTING

What was to become the most exciting, controversial, and expensive study-discussion program attempted by the Experimental Discussion Project began quietly in the spring of 1953. At that time the Project had been experimenting with several approaches to discussion of a number of subjects: It had tried a discussion series based on distinguished feature films; it had tried out some of the programs developed by the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults; it was considering the development of the program on the Humanities. Someone suggested a study-discussion program on modern art. "If you want something *controversial* for discussion, you can't beat it!" An art critic in Los Angeles, Jules Langsner, volunteered to try to work up such a program for an experimental group meeting in the Fund's discussion rooms. The results were so encouraging that he was authorized to continue the experiment and develop a full length course.

In 1954 Langsner completed this first experimental version, entitled YOU AND MODERN ART, and it was tried out successfully with several groups in Southern California. At his recommendation, the program was then transferred to the Art Institute of Chicago for completion. There, in 1955, a version of the program, entitled LOOKING AT MODERN ART, entirely new, but using many of the techniques suggested by Langsner, was developed and successfully tested under the direction of Katherine Kuh, Curator of Modern Painting and Sculpture. A difference of opinion, however, developed between the Fund and the Institute over the manner in which the program should be finally put together and distributed, and this version was abandoned.

In 1956 the program returned to the region of its origin, this time in the hands of the Department of Art in cooperation with University Extension, University of California at Los Angeles. In 1957 it emerged in handsomely published form, under the title LOOKING AT MODERN PAINTING. Six people collaborated in the preparation of this final version of the long-sought discussion program: Theresa L. Fulton, of Pomona College; Carl D. Sheppard, Frederick S. Wight, and Gibson A. Danes, all of the

U.C.L.A. Department of Art; and W. Joseph Fulton, then director of the Pasadena Art Museum. Leonard Freedman, director of the Liberal Arts Center of University Extension, served as "expert on discussion" in the preparation of the series.

The program's manual for participants outlined the ten sessions.

The manual contained over 80 illustrations, many of them in color, including representative works of Picasso, Braque, Matisse, Kandinsky, de Kooning, Gris, Mondrian, van Gogh, Motherwell, and Miro. A leader's discussion guide was prepared by Leonard Freedman and Gibson Danes (now director of the Department of Art, Yale University); it was later (1958) revised by two exhibiting artists, Frances Field and JoAnne Schneider. A set of 46 color slides was also prepared for use by groups.

As the first "packaged" program to demonstrate successfully the use of the study-discussion approach to understanding in this field, LOOKING AT MODERN PAINTING is a landmark in art education for adults. It has proved also to be one of the most popular discussion programs developed within the Project. Part of its popularity is undoubtedly due to the controversial nature of modern art, and controversy in one form or another is the essence of a good discussion program. Furthermore, modern art is a subject about which many people are curious. The MODERN PAINTING program assembled a representative collection of good reproductions of painters from a variety of "schools" of modern painting; the readings presented various points of view about the paintings themselves, including quotations from the painters as to their *intentions* in painting as they did. By emphasizing learning for understanding, in a situation which invited discussion and enabled people to "disagree agreeably," the program helped participants to learn more about the subject itself and also to develop attitudes of tolerance toward, and understanding of, the views of others.

DISCOVERING MODERN POETRY

In the fall of 1953 The Fund for Adult Education announced to the directors of adult education programs in its Test Cities Project* that to each submitting an acceptable proposal for an original study-discussion program, it would grant up to $2,000 in order to develop an experimental version. Several directors accepted this offer and developed programs.** George Connor,*** then director of the Adult Education Council of Chattanooga, in 1955 prepared and successfully tried out a discussion program entitled "An Introduction to Modern Poetry," thus demonstrating the feasibility of developing a study-discussion program on this subject. At his suggestion, the Fund asked Elizabeth Drew, Visiting Professor of Literature at Smith College, to prepare a new series on Modern Poetry. The resulting program, DISCOVERING MODERN POETRY, appeared in the fall of 1956.

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*This Project, conducted in 1951-54, involved 12 medium-sized, geographically scattered communities and one region (West Texas). It was designed to "discover the most effective ways of coordinating and expanding adult education activities within the local community."

**These included Texas Technological College, for a program on discussion of folk songs, "Sing Your America"; The York (Pa.) Adult Education Council, for the development of a series on "Drama for Discussion"; and The Akron Foundation for Adult Education for a program, "Design and You."

***Mr. Connor, now associate professor of English, Chattanooga University, is co-author with Elizabeth Drew of the version being prepared for commercial publication.

It consisted of a manual for participants by Miss Drew, divided into ten sessions. A small leaflet suggesting questions for reflection supplemented the manual. Miss Drew prepared also a special Guide for Leaders, incorporating some of her own interpretations of key poems. As part of the DISCOVERING MODERN POETRY package, participants were supplied with two paper-bound books of poems – T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land And Other Poems,* and *The Pocket Book of Modern Verse.* The final component in the set of program materials consisted of two recordings of a dozen modern poets reading their own poems. These included Dylan Thomas, Robert Frost, John Crowe Ransom, Marianne Moore, etc. Because the POETRY program had been successfully tried out in the earlier version by George Connor, Elizabeth Drew's program was published without a preliminary test.

SHAKESPEARE AND HIS THEATRE

In the spring of 1957, J. Roby Kidd, director of the Canadian Association for Adult Education, suggested that an adult seminar on Shakespeare to be held in Stratford, Ontario, in connection with the annual Shakespeare Festival there, might be developed into a study-discussion program. The focus would be upon several significant plays, upon the theatre in which they developed, and upon various ways in which they have been staged. In August, 1957, the Fund made a grant to the Canadian Association for Adult Education to develop an experimental study-discussion program along the lines indicated. The Association assigned Peter G. Martin, its assistant director, to coordinate production of the program. F. David Hoeniger, a Shakespearean scholar at the University of Toronto, was engaged to prepare the content of the series.

In its experimental form the series was plentifully supplied with printed and audio-visual aids. Each participant was given five books: the participant's manual, G. B. Harrison's *Introducing Shakespeare,* and paperback editions of three plays – *Twelfth Night, Hamlet* and *Henry V.* In addition, groups were supplied with copies of Mark Van Doren's *Shakespeare* and H. Granville-Barker's *Preface to Hamlet.* Audio-visual aids included three films (interviews with Tyrone Guthrie on *Twelfth Night* and with Michael Langham on *Hamlet,* and *The Stratford Adventure***), one filmstrip on Elizabethan and Modern Stages, and three recordings (John Barrymore in excerpts from *Twelfth Night,* John Gielgud in excerpts from *Hamlet,* and Laurence Olivier in excerpts from *Hamlet* and *Henry V*).

The series was successfully tried out with a few test groups in the United States and Canada in the spring of 1958. The program was somewhat revised in the summer of 1958, and a new version released for limited distribution in Canada and a few communities in the U.S. in the fall of 1958.

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*This 20-minute, 16 mm color film, produced by the National Film Board of Canada, was a dramatic account of the origin of the Stratford (Ontario) Shakespeare Festival.

Appendix B

SAMPLE EVALUATION FORMS

For the participants • discussion leaders • organizers

JEFFERSON AND OUR TIMES

Group Member's End-of-Series Evaluation

____________________ (Place)

____________________ (Date)

1. What do you feel you have gotten out of participation in this series of discussion meetings? (Review of history; chance to talk about current issues in light of Jefferson's views, etc.)
2. Please rate the recordings used in connection with this series with reference to their effectiveness in providing a basis for group discussion. (A-excellent; B-fair; and C-poor).

___Program 1—The Living Declaration
___Program 2—Divided We Stand
___Program 3—Light and Liberty
___Program 4—Freedom to Work
___Program 5—Freedom of the Press
___Program 6—The Danger of Freedom
___Program 7—The Democrat and the Commissar
___Program 8—The Ground of Justice
___Program 9—The University of the United States
___Program 10—Nature's Most Precious Gift

3. How useful did you find the materials contained in the group participant's manual in providing background for profitable discussion? (Please comment on its length as well as on its content.)
4. Would you favor adding the scripts of the recorded programs to the printed materials supplied for background reading, even if this added, say $1.00, to their cost?
5. Did you feel that the "questions for discussion" included in the participant's manual for the series were:

   ________quite useful; ________fairly useful; ________not at all useful

   Please give, if you can, examples of the kinds of questions you feel to have been most useful in promoting discussion.
6. Were you stimulated to do any extra reading in connection with your participation in this program? If so, please list materials you read.
7. Do you feel the suggested readings now given are adequate?
8. Please add any comments on your experience with this series not brought out in the above questions.

THE CITIZEN AND THE MASS MEDIA

(An Experimental Discussion Series)

Discussion Leader's Report

Meeting Topic ______________ Date ________ No. present ____

Place (city) ______________ Group ______________

1. Did you think that the discussion was:
   - ________Very successful
   - ________Fairly successful
   - ________Unsuccessful
2. Amount of group participation:
   - ________100 - 75%
   - ________75 - 50%
   - ________50 - 25%
   - ________25 - 0%
3. Did you feel that the technical quality of the film or recording was:
   - ________Excellent
   - ________Fair
   - ________Poor
4. Did you feel that the recording helped the discussion:
   - ________A great deal
   - ________Some
   - ________Not at all
5. If you felt that the film or recording was not helpful, please give reasons why.
6. What issues did you spend the most time discussing?
7. What did you like *best* about this particular meeting?
8. What suggestions do you have for the improvement of future meetings?

(USE THE BACK OF THE SHEET IF NECESSARY) ______________________

(Name)

GREAT MEN AND GREAT ISSUES IN OUR AMERICAN HERITAGE

(A Series of Experimental Film Discussion Programs)

Discussion Leader's Report

Film .... Date .... No. present ....

Place (city) .... Group ....

(public school, AAUW, etc.)

1. Did you think that the discussion was:
   - ....very successful
   - ....fairly successful
   - ....a flop
2. Amount of group participation:
   - ....100 - 75%
   - .... 75 - 50%
   - .... 50 - 25%
   - .... 25 - 0%
3. Did the group keep "on the beam" in the discussion:
   - ....very well
   - ....fairly well
   - ....poorly
4. What issues did you spend the most time discussing?
5. Did the discussion go according to plan?
6. Did you feel that the film helped the discussion:
   - ....a great deal
   - ....some
   - ....not at all
7. Did you preview the film?
8. Did the group members refer to the film and reading materials:
   - ....often
   - ....some
   - ....not at all
9. What problems, if any, came up in *showing* the film?
10. What method, or methods, did you use to "bridge the gap" from viewing to discussion:
    - ....leader's introduction
    - ....panel
    - ....role playing
    - ....sub groups
    - ....problem census
    - .... others (specify)
11. Did you feel that your "bridging" method was:
    - ....very successful
    - .... fairly successful
    - ....unsucccessful
12. What did you like least about this particular meeting?
13. What did you like best about this particular meeting?

....

(name)

AGING IN THE MODERN WORLD

(An Experimental Discussion Series)

Group Organizer's Summary

(for use at the close of the course)

Name of Group ....Date ....

Place (city) ....Average No. in Group ....

I. *GROUP COMPOSITION*

1. List the number of individuals in your group in each of the following age categories (estimate if necessary).

   ....Under 30 45-60

   ....30-45 61-

2. List the number of individuals in your group in each of the following educational levels (estimate if necessary).

   ....Elementary School ....College Graduate

   ....Some High School ....Graduate Work

   ....Some College

3. How many of your members were:

   ....Men

   ....Women

4. How many people originally enrolled in your group were able to attend all sessions (estimate if necessary)?

   How many completed 5 or more?

   How many attended only one session?

II. *DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP*

1. How many of the group meetings were led by:

   ....The group leader

   ....An assistant group leader

   ....Other (explain)

2. How many group members served more than once as group leaders?

3. What type of group leadership would you recommend for other groups using these materials? And why?

4. Do you feel the material in the "Discussion Leaders Guide" is:

   ....Excellent ....Fair ....Poor

   Comment.

5. What other materials would you suggest as aids to discussion leaders?

III. *READING MATERIAL*

1. What *fraction* of the group usually read the assigned material before each session? ....
   a. Which of the assigned readings were most useful?
   b. Which were least useful?
2. Should the amount of material in each assignment have been
   More .... Less .... About the same ....
3. Should other types of reading material have been included?
   Yes .... No .... If yes, please specify.

IV. *TOPICS*

1. Which topics provided the basis for the best discussion sessions?

2. Which topics provided basis for the least successful sessions?

3. On the basis of the experience, would you recommend any other essay topics?

V. *GENERAL*

1. Do you think this discussion program was:
   .... Highly successful
   .... Moderately successful
   .... Unsuccessful

2. What was the *most satisfactory* part of the program?

3. What was the *least satisfactory* part of the program?

4. What special problems, if any, did the group encounter in this series that have not been touched on in any of the above questions?

Report prepared by:

....
(name)

....
(address)

....
(city and state)

LOOKING AT MODERN PAINTING

(Group Member Report at End of Session 5)

1. Give your general reactions to the discussion meetings held to date.

2. How do you find the readings?

   Difficult?________ Easy?________ About right?________

   Did you find them helpful in understanding the concepts of modern painting covered to date? If not, explain.

3. How do you feel about the selection of slides?

   How do you feel about the time spent in viewing them?

   Not enough time spent on them ____________

   Too much time spent on them ____________

   Just about right ____________

   Other comments:

4. How do you feel about the group discussion of the subject as an aid to understanding?

   Very helpful________ Some help________ No help________

5. What – for you – has been the most valuable part of this program to date?

6. What suggestions do you have for the improvement of future meetings?

Appendix C

Note: The following is a substantial extract from a paper written by Dr. Betty Miller Unterberger, who was director of the Liberal Arts Center for Adults under the auspices of Whittier College, Whittier, California (one of the Test Centers).

In her paper, entitled "Discussion, Liberal Education, and Public Responsibility," Dr. Unterberger "suggested the possibility of a causal relationship between study-discussion in the liberal arts and the development of public responsibility." She used the method of presenting selected cases. Her paper not only gives cases of what happened to individuals engaging in study-discussion, but is itself a case history of the beginning and growth of a study-discussion center.

THE WHITTIER STORY

> Study-discussion is a manifestation of freedom. When appropriately performed in relation to sound readings, it develops man's capacity for deliberation, decision, and responsibility. Discussion ignites the mind to action. It encourages individual reading and reflection before and after participation. It challenges the participant to select those aspects of his previous knowledge and experience which relate to the issue, and examine them within the matrix of the readings and the viewpoints of other members of the group. When properly carried on, discussion cultivates the desire, the courage, and the ability to ask fundamental questions.

The new department established to promote the program in liberal adult education was named the Liberal Arts Center for Adults. An instructor in the History Department, I was appointed the first director. I began the operation of the center with a search for lay discussion leaders to inaugurate the program. With the aid of the college administration, I selected the names of twenty-five persons who appeared to have some qualifications as discussion leaders. I interviewed each one of these people personally and found an enthusiastic reception to the projected program. However, there was a general unwillingness to assume the responsibility of discussion leadership. Most persons interviewed confessed to being unqualified for, if not downright frightened of, such a responsibility. I finally succeeded in persuading five persons to become lay discussion leaders, after I agreed to co-lead the discussion groups with them. I mention these facts only because of the great difference in the willingness of persons to become leaders *after* they had participated in the program a year or more.

I followed the policy of selecting leadership almost exclusively from among the participants in the program. Leaders had the following responsibilities: (1) attendance at a leadership training program of approximately twenty-five hours, (2) major responsibility for the recruitment of a discussion group, which required between twenty-five and forty hours of time, (3) administration and leadership of a discussion group for a period of eleven weeks.

Over a period of almost five years, we trained a total of one hundred and twenty leaders. Sixty-two went through leadership training at least twice, and led two or more discussion groups. In the first year it took personal interviews with five people to obtain one leader. By the beginning of the fourth year of operation, leaders were acquired through the simple device of a letter of invitation. Only two such letters were required to obtain one leader. Thus, it appeared that participation in the discussion program served to cultivate a willingness on the part of individuals to assume and retain discussion leadership.

The task of securing the first participants in the program was as difficult as that of securing the initial leadership. As I talked with people in the Whittier area in an effort to persuade them to join discussion groups, I became aware of a curious fact. Numerous people were afraid to talk. Some were fearful of revealing their ignorance. Others were afraid their views would be rejected. Still others felt they could learn little from their fellow citizens. Many were afraid to discuss controversial subjects. Some resisted a program in liberal adult education because they believed *liberal* meant *subversive* or at least *pink*.

These preliminary conversations made clear the specific objectives necessary for our first discussion groups. First, we must foster a free atmosphere for discussion. Second, we must encourage people to have confidence in their capacities to think and make worthwhile contributions. Third, we must help them discover that others also have knowledge, experience, and wisdom to contribute. Finally, we must help them generate the high excitement of intellectual companionship.

During the first two years of operation, the Liberal Arts Center confronted many problems, ranging from recruitment of new participants to answering charges of "un-American" activities posed both by individuals and specific organizations. Despite these problems, the program grew rapidly, virtually doubling its enrollment each year until it reached 1200 persons. The rapid increase was due largely to the efforts of the leaders and enthusiastic past participants. *Between fifty and sixty per cent of each term's enrollment was composed of past participants.*

As leaders and participants in the area gained experience in discussion, it became possible to set higher standards. We established new objectives, for both discussion leadership institutes and community groups. We sought to raise the quality of discussions by emphasis on certain fundamentals. These were *careful reading, clear understanding of the basic issues, formulation of provocative questions, concentrated listening, thoughtful progression, and finally, the analysis of a variety of viewpoints* on the discussion topic.

Many participants became enthusiastic about the value of study-discussion when they discovered their own capacities for thinking, listening, and talking. Dozens of participants described voluntarily to me and to their discussion leaders the profound effects of study-discussion on their lives. In describing their experiences, many of them expressed the thought that in their study-discussion groups they "discovered themselves." As one participant put it, "When I think of the tremendous benefit the Center has been in helping me find myself, I cannot help but feel that dollars alone are not enough repayment."

Psychologists are agreed that responsibility grows with self-knowledge. Many participants have spoken of intensive self-evaluation programs initiated by their study-discussion experience. Here are the words of one:

> Again, we want to say how thrilled we were with the Ways of Mankind discussion group. To brush the cobwebs away and awaken the power within is a tremendous realization. Sometime in the future, I'd love to discuss with you the last meeting. It really seemed like a benediction to me because at last we broke through and saw a glimpse of the pearl we had been searching for during all the preceding meetings. Perhaps as a result of our having participated, we will see more clearly that man's search for himself is truly life's quest. Our humble thanks to anyone who brings us back to the touchstone.

Another wrote:

> I have participated in two of the programs and feel that I am a better person for it. The more knowledge, understanding, and discrimination we possess not only helps us in fulfilling ourselves as individuals but also helps preserve and enrich our society. I found the liberal arts group primarily responsible for my recent growth in mind and spirit.
>
> I came to the program with strong convictions in many fields. In some cases I found fallacies in some of these preconceived notions. In

> others I found my convictions were strongly confirmed. But in order to intelligently discuss most subjects, I found it necessary to re-appraise and re-evaluate my beliefs. This took a great deal of time, thought and soul searching. The materials provided by the program and points of view of others were invaluable, but more important, the liberal arts program was the impetus. I wish more adults, rather than fewer, could be given this opportunity. The gain would be not only to us as individuals but to our entire society.

Once the seed of discussion was planted in the minds of a small group of individuals in the local area, it took root and spread. It resulted not only in other discussion groups in the liberal arts but also in discussion at different levels of human affairs. Husbands and wives began to discuss subjects other than the domestic routine, their social lives and business problems. They spoke of the experience with deep satisfaction. Some of the neighborhood coffee groups, that used to concentrate on gossip, now discussed questions of far broader import. Participants reported that their social gatherings had acquired new significance. People who had learned how to think, talk, and listen together in discussion groups now found this to be one of the most rewarding ways in which they could spend their time. Others who had not learned how to discuss found they were missing something vital. They, too, joined discussion groups. When a street in Fullerton was going to be pushed through to connect with an adjoining boulevard, the neighbors met under the guidance of a discussion leader to discuss the problem reasonably instead of responding in hot resentment.

Study-discussion spread further. Participants and leaders in the program used it in churches, in schools, in business activities and in civic organizations. A local P.T.A. group is an example. When they met to discuss their current activities, a study-discussion leader proposed that the P.T.A. organize a study-discussion program on the problems confronting parents in understanding their children. Nine participants in the Whittier liberal arts discussion groups volunteered to lead these P.T.A. study-discussion programs in parent-education. They selected their study-materials carefully and entitled the program "The You in Youth." The project gained momentum and became so successful that it spread to ninety-two P.T.A. organizations in the area.

Study-discussion made an impact on the teaching profession. Three members of the faculty of a neighboring college introduced the discussion method into their classrooms. They also organized a faculty discussion group to survey and discuss current educational problems of their institution. Motivated by their study-discussion experience, two young high school teachers applied and received appointments as directors of adult education in their own high schools. They began to pioneer in the establishment of high school study-discussion programs in the liberal arts for adults. They, as well as other participants, had already begun to experiment with the method in their regular class rooms. Numerous women reported that their discussion experience had stimulated and encouraged them to return to college for teaching credentials.

In the past three years numerous leaders in the study-discussion program have assumed positions of civic responsibility throughout the area. In many instances, they have attributed their willingness to accept these positions to the knowledge, skills, or understanding gained in their study-discussion experience. Today, in Whittier, Fullerton, La Habra, and Monterey Park, former leaders are presidents and directors of the Chamber of Commerce, Family Service, Civil Defense, Community Chest, Red Cross, United Fund, League of Women Voters, Women's Clubs, Men's Service Organizations and others. At least ten former participants are serving on local boards of education or city councils. Of the five persons who led the first study-discussion groups in Whittier, two have since been honored with the title of "outstanding citizen of the year." One was elected to the High School Board of Education and later became its president. The two remaining leaders have served in responsible positions in community organizations.

Study-discussion spread beyond the local area. Many foreigners participated in the program. They expressed deep appreciation for the experience. An Indian described it as a "most effective demonstration of the democratic way of life." Today, former participants and leaders in the program have established and are leading study-discussion groups in India, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Canada.

Many leaders speak of having acquired an ability to listen as a result of their discussion experience. This, they point out, has led them to a better understanding of differing viewpoints. W. W. is an example. A real estate salesman, intelligent but argumentative, he was unwilling to assume civic responsibilities. After participating in three discussion programs, he agreed to become a leader. He later confessed that participation and leadership in discussion had made him a "changed man." He described the changes as an ability to listen, a deep interest in the viewpoints of others, and a conviction of the "power for change which could be wielded by an interested few." In the course of the next year he became a member of the Board of Directors of the Whittier Area Community Chest, Chairman of the Citizens' Committee Studying Curriculum in the High School District, and Chairman of the first Whittier Community Town Hall which he organized on a discussion basis.

J. O. also ascribes her present activity in community affairs to her discussion experience. A brilliant, attractive woman, mother of four, she welcomed the opportunity to think and talk with others in the liberal arts discussion program. Her ability to ask fundamental questions was recognized immediately. She was invited to become a discussion leader. She accepted, despite great fears of her social inadequacy. After leading two discussion groups, J. O. began to participate in civic activities, although she had never done so before. During the next few years she assumed leadership in the establishment of the Whittier Civic Ballet Company and became its second president; she became secretary of the Whittier Art Association; she spoke on civic matters throughout the area. In addition, she led eight study-discussion groups, in which she succeeded in encouraging many other women to participate in community affairs. She is convinced that her experience as a discussion leader developed her self-confidence and courage, and led her to discover the way to "use her enthusiasm and her analytical and critical abilities for the good of the community."

B. F. was another intelligent woman who had never participated in community affairs. When she enrolled in her first discussion group, she confessed to me her feelings of insecurity. She could scarcely speak in a group without trembling. Later, she reported being treated with a new respect in her discussion group. B. F. found people listening to her contributions with interest. Thus encouraged, she not only spoke her views forthrightly, but also defended them against people whose status had formerly intimidated her. Participants in her groups spoke of her discussion abilities with admiration and respect. Last year B. F. agreed to become president of the Whittier League of Women Voters. She attributes her willingness to assume this responsibility directly to her discussion experience, where she broadened her knowledge of politics and government, gained skill in the arts of communication, acquired a new respect for herself, and gained the courage to use her abilities in community affairs.

Two other study-discussion participants, the President and the Education Chairman of the East Whittier Junior Woman's Club, succeeded in persuading their organization to promote and organize six study-discussion groups on Great Issues in Education. Many of the members of the organization participated in the education groups. In the course of their discussions, they acquired a deep interest in the problem of educating the gifted child in a free society. As a result of their concern, they planned and organized a series of lecture-discussions on the topic by qualified speakers. They raised the money to finance the program and presented it as a public service at a local high school. In addition, participants in the study-discussion groups in education formed campaign committees to run two leaders of the discussion groups as candidates in local school board elections. Both leaders were elected.

B. H. is another person who credits his recent community activities to his four-year participation in the liberal arts discussion program. A man of 60 years or more, and president of a prosperous corporation in the community, he agreed to come to his first discussion group in World Affairs only after considerable persuasion. He attended several meetings, participating rather extensively. He found it difficult to listen and even more difficult to keep from talking. One evening the group became involved in a discussion on China. The question posed was, "Should the U.S. recognize Red China?" The discussion became heated as B. H. found himself pitted against a pacifist with a point of view completely opposed to his own. Each gentleman found it difficult to understand the other's viewpoint. B. H. grew red in the face. His voice became louder as the discussion progressed. At the close of the meeting, he stayed behind. He informed me that if certain citizens in the community were aware of the topics discussed and some of the views expressed in the liberal arts discussion program, I would lose my job. He believed that these groups were engaged in subversive activity. He intended to tell both the president and the dean of Whittier College exactly what was going on. His viewpoint was not unique in the community. I had heard it expressed by numerous people although not quite so vehemently. B. H. and I had a long conversation. I raised certain questions concerning the place of discussion in a free society. He was an intelligent man and soon began to see the relationship between free discussion and a free society. When we parted that evening, he had agreed to attend the remaining sessions of the World Affairs program.

B. H. continued to participate in discussion groups, always selecting those in the areas of government, economics, or international relations. He became a staunch advocate of the program, defending it against persons who used the same arguments to discredit it which he had once used. At the end of his third program, he devised a prayer for participants, "Lord, fill my mouth with real good stuff and nudge me when I've said enough."

Two years after his original enrollment in the program, B. H.'s business ventures required him to go abroad. He came back enthusiastic about his new friendships abroad, but troubled by a new concern. His study and discussions of world affairs had made him deeply sympathetic to the problems besetting the peoples of other nations. He was disturbed by the behavior of some Americans abroad. He was concerned about the ignorance and misinformation that existed, both in his home community concerning foreigners, and in certain Asiatic countries concerning the United States.

A few months later B. H. agreed to become chairman of the V.I.S.A. committee of the local Rotary Club. The function of the V.I.S.A. committee was to help acquaint foreign students with citizens of the surrounding communities. B. H. viewed his job as something broader than this. He was convinced that real understanding between foreign students and citizens of the local area could best be developed through discussion and close personal association. He initiated this phase of the program by inviting students to visit and to live in his own home. He talked with them, became aware of their problems, and made them his friends. He and his committee made the same opportunities available to other citizens in the community. The program grew in strength and in size and spread to other communities.

B. H. hoped that some of the foreign students who had learned to know the United States by knowing some of its people intimately might go home and speak with more understanding of what they had seen and heard. To expedite this, he initiated a fund-raising drive to finance a student speaking tour throughout Japan. Successful in these efforts, he sent back to Japan a charming Japanese girl who was known and loved by many of the people in Whittier. She could speak intimately of life in an American community because of her close association with the people of Whittier. B. H.'s efforts also resulted in the sending of an Indian student on a similar tour throughout India.

B. H. was soon appointed chairman of the District Rotary V.I.S.A. Committee which included fifty-two clubs in Southern California. He convinced these clubs of the importance of integrating foreign students into the local communities as a vital step toward international understanding. His efforts spread throughout the state and across the nation. Several months ago the Chief of the Program Evaluation Staff of the International Educational Exchange Service of the State Department came to Whittier to speak to the local Rotary Club. Here she made clear that one of the most exciting and effective efforts in the direction of international understanding was being made in this area. This was largely through the efforts of one responsible citizen, B. H., who had caught a vision of what he could do to contribute to the brotherhood of man.

Not long ago B. H. told me that he had once thought a man could not learn much after sixty. He had been wrong. He confessed that it was not until he had participated in the liberal arts study-discussion program that he learned the art of listening, and developed the desire to understand the viewpoints of those who disagreed with him. This in turn had led to a new respect for others, and to his present dedication to "people to people" discussion as a fundamental approach to the development of world understanding.

J. M. was another successful executive who enrolled in the program with considerable reluctance. Vice president of a local steel firm, he had little time for activities outside of his business. He soon became vitally interested in his discussion experience. He was challenged by the difficulties encountered in analyzing his own opinions as well as the opinions presented by the readings and other participants. He discovered the importance of listening. When he finished his second series of programs, he enrolled all of his sales supervisors in discussion groups. He attended our leadership training institute and then led discussion groups in Economic Reasoning and World Politics. Although he had never participated before in any community activities, he now agreed to become chairman of a Chamber of Commerce study group investigating the merits of unification in the high school district. As a result of this investigation and his leadership in the liberal arts discussion program, which by this time brought considerable recognition in the eyes of the community, he was approached by a group of citizens to run for a position on the high school board of education. J. M. agreed. Campaigning on a platform of greater emphasis on liberal education in the high schools, he received strong support from many study-discussion participants. Despite the fact that the party machine was against him, he won the election. After one year of service on the board, he became its president. He is now also serving as Director of the Whittier Chapter of the American Red Cross. Several months ago he was named to the National Defense Executive Reserves by then Commerce Secretary Lewis L. Strauss. J. M. speaks freely, both in private and in public, of how study-discussion broadened his knowledge, developed his communication skills and his capacity for analysis, led him to a new understanding of himself and others, and encouraged him to use his abilities in civic affairs.

Appendix D

LIVING ROOM LEARNING

Note: The following article appeared in Today's Living, *the New York Herald Tribune magazine, January 31, 1960.*

Who Says the Art of Conversation is Dead?

The Living Room is Becoming an Educational Institution.
Discussion Clubs and Study Groups are
Springing Up In Suburban Homes.
By Richard L. Bode

There's something new in living rooms these days — serious, organized conversation. It's not after-dinner chitchat, but the probing discussion of individuals exploring ideas. To find its counterpart in American tradition, you have to go back to the cracker barrel. And even that doesn't give a clear picture of the trend.

The conversation is being generated by discussion groups that organize in several ways. Sometimes the members simply harness their own head of steam. But more often than not they need — and get — help from study-discussion programs developed with financial aid from *The Fund for Adult Education*, an independent organization created by The Ford Foundation in 1951. The courses in this program are conducted in the New York metropolitan area through New York University's Division of General Education.

At last count, NYU had 91 discussion groups under way with an enrollment of nearly 1,500 in three boroughs of New York City and eight suburban counties. Dean Carl Tjerandsen, who directs the program of Liberal Arts in Extension, believes this newly developed technique of learning by conversing at home is attracting a growing number of people who are tired of talking about trivialities.

For example, a group in Queens meets at the home of David Goodman, 123-16 83rd Avenue, Kew Gardens, to discuss Ways of Mankind, a course in anthropology. Discovering Modern Poetry, another course, holds the interest of a New Jersey group that gathers at the home of Robert Mitchell, 707 Cornwall Avenue, Teaneck. And another group, studying the History of Art, alternates among the homes of its members in the Roslyn Heights area of Nassau County, Long Island.

Not all discussion groups taking NYU courses meet in private homes. But Dean Tjerandsen likes to point out that for the first time since 1957, when NYU began to sponsor the program, a significant number — over 25% — are now meeting there. And even where churches, schools, and community centers are the meeting places, the living room atmosphere prevails.

In operation, the study-discussion group can be described as a home-style version of the TV program "Open End." The participants may meet biweekly, weekly, or oftener. In White Plains, 15 housewives in the Elmwood Hills development are undermining the *Kaffeeklatsch*. They all live on the same block and prefer to spend their mornings reading Ruth Benedict, and their one evening out a week comparing cultures instead of social notes.

"The group evolved out of a need," says Mrs. Alan Shulman of 23 Bilton Road. "I wanted to go back to school, but with small children, this was the only way I could do it."

Mrs. Shulman brought the women together with the aid of Community Workshops, a voluntary adult education agency chartered by the New York State Board of Regents. The agency told her about the NYU discussion program and helped her canvass the area for members. Some of the women knew each other only casually before they began to meet in one another's homes.

Meetings begin promptly at 8:30 p.m. and are scheduled to end at 10:30. "But sometimes the conversation is so stimulating that we keep right on going," Mrs. Shulman says. "Coffee and cake are served when the meeting is over, and not until."

This group is unusual in only one respect: it's confined to women. Three separate studies, soon to be made public by The Fund for Adult Education, indicate that husbands and wives form the hard core of most groups. Not since the living room replaced the kitchen as the focal point of the home have married couples discovered so much about what their mates are really thinking.

It isn't uncommon for a husband, after he's settled in his favorite chair after dinner, to turn to his wife and say, "Dear, about that point you raised the other night at the group. . . ." And then another evening, which might otherwise have been rather barren, is spent in intellectual talk.

Of course, there are exceptions. There's the wife who sat through seven consecutive meetings without once saying a word. At the eighth meeting she made the most of her husband's absence by monopolizing the conversation.

The studies turned up another significant fact. Most members of discussion groups are college graduates with fairly high incomes and settled positions in the community. Obviously, they don't feel their education ended with a college diploma, or that they know enough to be complacent in a complex world.

One typical group, in Suffolk County, Long Island, organized voluntarily more than a year ago. The membership — three lawyers, two doctors, one teacher, and one editor — plus wives, of course — had only one purpose: to fertilize their cultural desert. For most, Manhattan's theaters and museums are beyond everyday reach. Yet they wanted something to restore their perspective and sweep the cobwebs from their minds.

"Frankly, I didn't think this was the answer," says Raymond Sobel of 16 Abbot Street, West Babylon, a history teacher at the Oceanside High School. "But now I think it's the best thing that could have happened."

The group actually grew out of the League of Women Voters, after the local chapter disbanded. Some of the women decided that the new organization, and the introduction of the husbands, would provide a different chemistry. They were right.

Like most groups, this one met informally to discuss topics chosen ahead of time by unanimous consent. At the conclusion of each meeting (which in true "Open End" style sometimes lasted far into the night), they picked the subject for the next meeting. In the first year they talked their way through capital punishment, fallout, Thomas Mann's "Buddenbrooks," the reunification of Germany, and the role of women in the modern world. On the fallout question they invited a biologist from Brookhaven National Laboratory to fill in the technical gaps.

"At the outset we had more trouble controlling the conversation than finding things to talk about," Mr. Sobel recalls. "I think we broke every rule of good conversation including one that might have helped the most — short periods of silence to let us catch our breath." They even picked a discussion leader to act as moderator. But this tactic failed because he found it impossible to remain detached.

Wanted: A Study in Depth

By the end of the first year, the members felt a need for a change of pace. They wanted to discuss something in greater depth over a longer period of time. One of the members heard about the NYU discussion program and invited the coordinator for Long Island, Mrs. Beverly Fuchs, to a meeting. Mrs. Fuchs explained the study-discussion procedure and the courses offered.

The group elected to study *Ways of Mankind*. The tuition fee is $21 a couple (or $14 an individual), and the course extends over a period of 10 sessions.

In return, the group obtained a university-trained discussion leader who can and does remain detached. He brought with him a series of 10 LP recordings especially designed for the course. And, as a text, each member received a volume of readings in anthropology, compiled by Walter Goldschmidt, professor of anthropology at the University of California at Los Angeles.

Each week the members read a different assignment in the text. Then, when the meeting opens, they listen to a recorded dramatization that illustrates some point the text makes. The conversation emerges from what they've read and heard.

The leader isn't a professional teacher and he doesn't necessarily bring great knowledge with him. His main job is to guide the conversation along fruitful lines.

As discussion leader for the Suffolk County group, NYU assigned Maurice Weissman, vice-president of a medium-size optical manufacturing firm in Queens. Weissman, who lives at 100 Ketcham Road, Hicksville, is a graduate of Syracuse University, where he majored in sociology and psychology and took a strong interest in group dynamics. Dean Tjerandsen heard about his interest and abilities through another group leader and recruited him into the program.

"When I lead a group," Weissman says, "I don't supply the answers, just the questions. The discussions broaden people's horizons, make life more interesting for them and for me."

Usually the leaders are professional or semiprofessional people with varied educational backgrounds. They include artists, accountants, architects, and lawyers. One of the most enthusiastic leaders is Arthur W. Francis, a chemical engineer who lives in Rockland County. Every Thursday night he leads a group of two couples and three single members in World Politics at his home, 7 Peachtree Terrace, New City. He became a leader three years ago after participating in a similar course at someone else's home.

"Most people haven't developed their leadership qualities to the fullest," he observes. "In fact, they've suppressed them. These discussions put people in a position in which they must criticize, make judgments, reach decisions, and communicate those decisions."

Last year more than 90 men and women spent two Saturdays attending the Leader Training Institute at the Washington Square campus of NYU. Of these, half were old leaders retraining in new courses. The rest were new volunteers.

And "volunteers" is a fairly accurate description. The token fee of $50 they receive for a course is intended as an honorarium to defray the costs of a baby sitter or travel between their home and a distant meeting place.

Sometimes the study-discussion procedure doesn't fit the bill. If the group would rather not devote an entire winter to one topic, it can take up single subjects and still obtain a trained leader. NYU offers a series of discussions based upon 10 booklets, each a case history on a controversial subject.

These booklets, prepared by the American Foundation for Continuing Education under grants from The Fund for Adult Education, carry such titles as "The Lively Ghost" (school desegregation), "The Handcuffed Sheriff" (political patronage), and "The Three-Party Line" (wiretapping). One group in Tenafly is trying to unravel these mysteries one Sunday night a month at Temple Sinai. (If the members would rather listen than talk, they can obtain a visiting professor under a series of lecture programs also offered by NYU.)

Aside from mutual understanding, there are personal benefits for the participants, too. An art-supply importer learned enough from the new and popular course *Looking at Modern Painting* to converse sympathetically about the subject with his customers – something he couldn't bring himself to do before. And a young woman with a college diploma told Dean Tjerandsen, "It wasn't until I took this course that I began to think."

Tested as Talk Triggers

This kind of response, common enough, isn't the result of happenstance; it's the result of design. The Fund has underwritten the cost of preparing 13 courses to date. These include subjects in democracy, economics, politics, art, poetry, justice, and the art of growing old. Each course is prepared by an authority, usually a professor or an entire university department. Before the course is approved as discussion material, it's tested with selected groups. Several new courses are being tested now.

Despite all this care, the objectives of the program are sometimes misunderstood. One man, after listening to an explanation of how a group works, said, "It sounds like another version of the lonely-hearts club to me."

The remark was overheard by Dr. Joseph Bram, chairman of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at NYU and a man with a deep commitment to adult education. "It's not the lonely *hearts,*" he replied, "it's the lonely *minds.*"

Appendix E

STUDY-DISCUSSION PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

Here, as of August, 1960, is the list of programs for which the Fund has arranged, or is arranging, publication through university or commercial publishers:

AGING IN TODAY'S SOCIETY, by Clark Tibbitts and Wilma Donahue. One-volume edition prepared by John Walker Powell. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960

EXPLORING THE WAYS OF MANKIND, by Walter Goldschmidt. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1960. Trade edition and Adult Education edition.

OUR COMMUNITY, edited by Dorothy and Curtis Mial. New York University Press, 1960.

ECONOMIC REASONING, by Robinson, Morton, and Calderwood, is available as always from The Brookings Institution, Washington, D. C.

The following are in preparation:

DISCOVERING MODERN POETRY, by Elizabeth Drew and George Connor. To be published by Holt, Rinehart, and Winston in the Fall of 1960.

LOOKING AT MODERN PAINTING, prepared by members of the Art Department, the University of California at Los Angeles. To be published by W. W. Norton, New York, early 1961.

THE NEW MASS MEDIA: CHALLENGE TO A FREE SOCIETY, by Gilbert Seldes. To be published by the Educational Foundation of the American Association of University Women.

Publication arrangements are in process for the following, with publication expected in 1961:

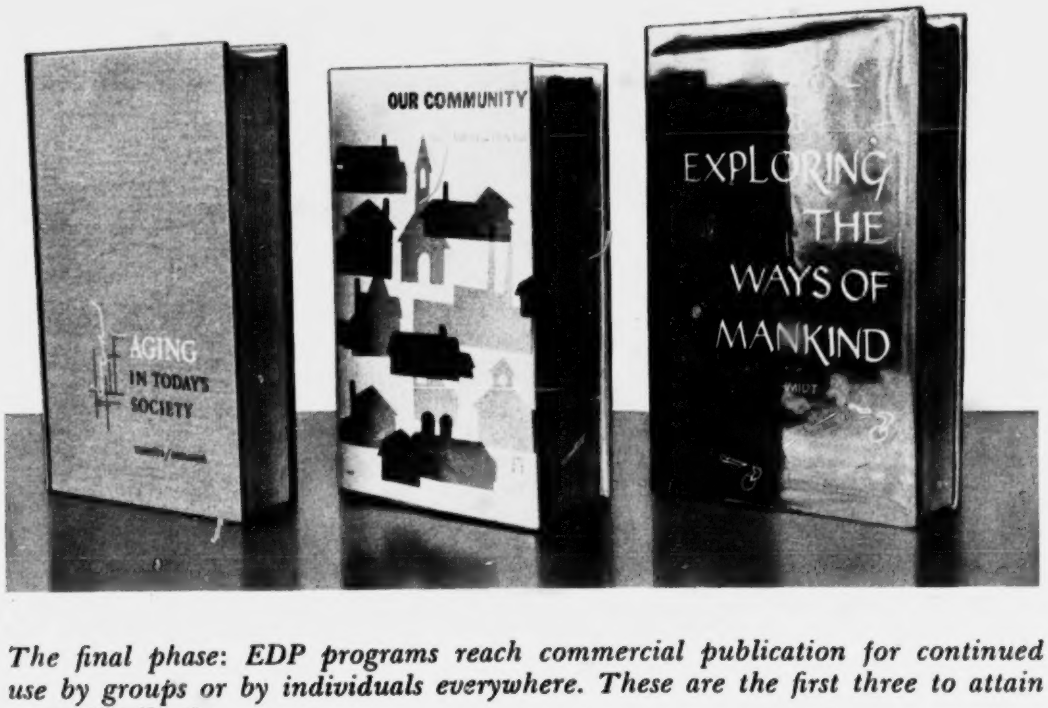
AVENUES TO THE ARTS, an introduction to the humanities, prepared by the American Foundation for Continuing Education.

MASS MEDIA – WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY?, edited by Paul Yager.

PARENTHOOD IN A FREE NATION, by Ethel Kawin. The full set will include:

- *The Basic Course* and Readings
- *Early Childhood*
- *Middle Childhood*
- *Later Childhood*
- *Adolescence*

ALL AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS for the Fund's Study-Discussion programs are available from The Audio-Visual Center, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.


AGING IN TODAY'S SOCIETY
OUR COMMUNITY
EXPLORING THE WAYS OF MANKIND

The final phase: EDP programs reach commercial publication for continued use by groups or by individuals everywhere. These are the first three to attain mass distribution.

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